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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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GMA allies packed House with supporters, say foes

PA-WAISAN LANG YAN!

By Juliet L. Javellana and Philip Tubeza

SENATE President Franklin Drilon admits he felt uncomfortable not applauding President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of

GMA ALLIES/ A9

Gonzalez says opposition could be using gov't funds

By Armand N. Nocum

UNFAZED by a scolding from the Palace for impolitic remarks, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez yesterday insinuated that taxpayers might be the ones footing the bill for protest rallies against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Gonzalez denied opposition claims that lo-

GONZALEZ / A8

Senate won't Cha-cha

Middle class sees 'third way' to fix RP's woes

By Luige A. del Puerto

THROUGH meditation and fasting, a group of people gathered at the foot of the People Power Monument on Edsa hopes to solve the country's woes.

They offer a "third way" and an analysis of why Edsa I and Edsa II failed to bring about genuine change in the country.

Their message is simple: What the country needs is a dose of spirituality, humility and self-sacrifice. For them, individuals must change before institutions can.

Those gathered at the monument belong to the middle class, which has largely shunned the street protests calling on President Macapagal-Arroyo to resign. Many are tired of the government but distrustful of the opposition.

An artist was sipping Starbucks coffee while listening to a university president defending his decision to ask for the President to step down.

Another speaker quoted a scene from the movie "Scent of a Woman" in which a young student was asked to sell out and keep his scholarship or reject the offer and risk a one-time

MIDDLE/ A22

Charter change good, bad, says RP's only PM

By Doris C. Dumlao, Ronnel W. Domingo and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

CESAR Virata, the country's first and only prime minister, sees a need to overhaul the Constitution and shift to a parliamentary system of government, but not as a way out of the current political crisis.

"To me, amending the Charter is something else. The problem (of Charter change) is it's being associated with political (motives). So I don't know what kind of Charter will come out of it," Virata said in an interview with the INQUIRER.

President Macapagal-Arroyo is fighting for political survival following allegations that she rigged the presidential election last year.

CHARTER/ A21

FOR THE MIDDLE forces, genuine change must start from within. Nicky Perlas and Fr. Robert Reyes issue a call for genuine reforms through prayer and fasting at the People Power Monument on Edsa in Quezon City. JOAN BONDOC

WITH fervor burning and the Philippine flag flying, leftist protesters watch the flames consume a giant effigy of President Macapagal-Arroyo in a huge Quezon City rally Monday. AFP

Only 3 senators support GMA plan

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and TJ Burgonio

DEAD on arrival is the fate of the move by President Macapagal-Arroyo to change the Constitution and adopt the federal-type, parliamentary system, senators said yesterday.

Senators frown on Ms Arroyo's proposal on Monday in her State of the Nation Address as she battles impeachment proceedings against her for allegedly rigging last year's elections and charges her family benefited from illegal gambling payoffs. Ms Arroyo has denied the charges.

Opposition to a Charter change is also prompted by self-preservation, lawmakers said. If approved, it will lead to the abolition of the Senate and the setting up of a unicameral legislature.

Senate President Franklin Drilon and Sen. Joker Arroyo said only three of the 23 senators—Richard Gordon, Edgardo Angara and Juan Ponce Enrile—had expressed agreement with Ms Arroyo's proposal.

Ms Arroyo proposes the transformation of Congress into a constituent assembly—instead of an elected convention—that will initiate the move from presidential to the parliamentary system.

As a constituent assembly, 18 senators, or three-fourths of the Senate members, are needed to propose any amendment to the Charter. A two-thirds vote, or 16 senators, is needed in the Senate to approve the calling of a constitutional convention.

Drilon and Arroyo both said it

SENATE/ A6

House leaders clash on impeachment rules

By Michael Lim Ubac

OPPOSITION lawmakers seeking to remove President Macapagal-Arroyo from office yesterday appealed for fairness as the House of Representatives opened discussions on how to proceed with the impeachment complaint against her.

"Rules should not favor any side. What is important is a fair process that will lead to the truth," said opposition Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano, one of the 42 lawmakers who have signed an amended impeachment complaint that they filed Monday.

Cayetano made the appeal as the House committee on rules met to debate impeachment procedures amid fears that the chamber dominated by Ms Arroyo's allies would use their numbers to kill the complaint or delay the proceedings for months.

One of the key issues is whether the opposition's amended complaint can be merged into that of lawyer Oliver Lozano, who filed an impeachment bid on June 27 that is regarded as weak.

Legislators also need to agree on whether additional signatories can be allowed to endorse the amended complaint. The opposition said it was confident it could muster in two or three weeks 79 votes—one-third of the 236-member House—needed to automatically send the impeachment complaint to the Senate for trial.

Once the rules are decided, these will be put to a vote in a plenary session. Only then may the

HOUSE / A8

Nora's lawyers rejoice: US cop failed to read singer her rights

Text and photos by Janet Susan R. Nepales, *LA Correspondent*

LOS ANGELES—Defense lawyers for Nora Aunor found reason to rejoice on Monday (Tuesday in Manila) during the preliminary hearing of the drug possession charges against her. One of the prosecution witnesses, a rookie airport policeman, admitted after a gruelling cross-examination that he failed to read the Filipino singer-actress her rights.

Officer Yves Didier said he also failed to give Aunor the Tagalog interpreter that she requested at the time of her arrest on March 30, when airport screeners stopped her on her way to Oakland.

The 53-year-old Aunor, whose real name is Nora Cabaltera Villamayor, was accused of carrying methamphetamine and drug paraphernalia.

Lawyer Sherwin Edelberg told the press after the proceedings: "I am very happy for my client ... the way the testimony came out. Even if she did make a statement that could possibly work against us, I think it is going to be suppressed."

Procedure dictates that after a person is officially taken into custody and before any interrogation takes place, police should inform the suspect of his right to remain silent (and tell him that anything he says can be used against him in a court of law)

NORA'S/ A22

'Hello Garci' never figured in GMA speech

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

DESPITE widespread anticipation that she would tackle head-on the political crisis confronting her, President Macapagal-Arroyo never intended to talk about "Hello Garci" or the impeachment case against her in her State of the Nation Address.

People close to Ms Arroyo yesterday spoke of how the President rehearsed her speech several times before her close advisers in sessions that once lasted up to midnight.

In an e-mail to the INQUIRER, Rigoberto Tiglao, chief of the Presidential Management Staff, said: "It (Sona) is not the proper podium for her to defend herself from allegations hurled by the opposition. It is even improper for her to take advantage of that podium to defend herself from impeachment charges which some in the body—the Congress—she is addressing have vowed to bring against her."

HELLO/ A6

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience occasional rains. Rains will be frequent over the western sections. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

MPIED BY: CYRIL L. BONABENTE, PDI RESEARCH/07/27/05

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Rains
Tagaytay	Rains	Zamboanga	Rains
Legazpi	Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Rains
Calapan	Rains	Davao	Rains

Second FRONT PAGE

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AFP admits discontent but discounts new coup

By Dona Pazzibugan

AN ARMED Forces official yesterday admitted "dissatisfaction" within its ranks, but claimed this is not enough to lead to another mutiny.

"There is always dissatisfaction about so many things, not exactly politics. But it is not even close to be a cause of paranoia," Col. Gaudencio Pangilinan, chief of the Armed Forces Counter Intelligence Group (AFPCIG) said in an interview with reporters in Camp Aguinaldo.

He said the possibility that young military officers are hatching another coup d'etat, like what happened in the July 27, 2003 Oakwood mutiny, was "remote and impossible."

"Our lieutenants, they don't even understand politics. We have our own problems to deal with in the Armed Forces," Pangilinan said.

Pangilinan, a member of the Philippine Military Academy Class 1984, was handpicked by AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu to head the once dormant military internal spy unit which he revived last March 1.

Pangilinan spoke to reporters in the wake of the recent manifestos released supposedly by a revived Young Officers Union (YOU) and another secret military group calling itself the "Protectors of the Filipino People."

Both groups vowed to oust President Macapagal-Arroyo, whom they accused of election fraud and corruption.

Pangilinan said these manifestos were "not from within (the military), we assure you that."

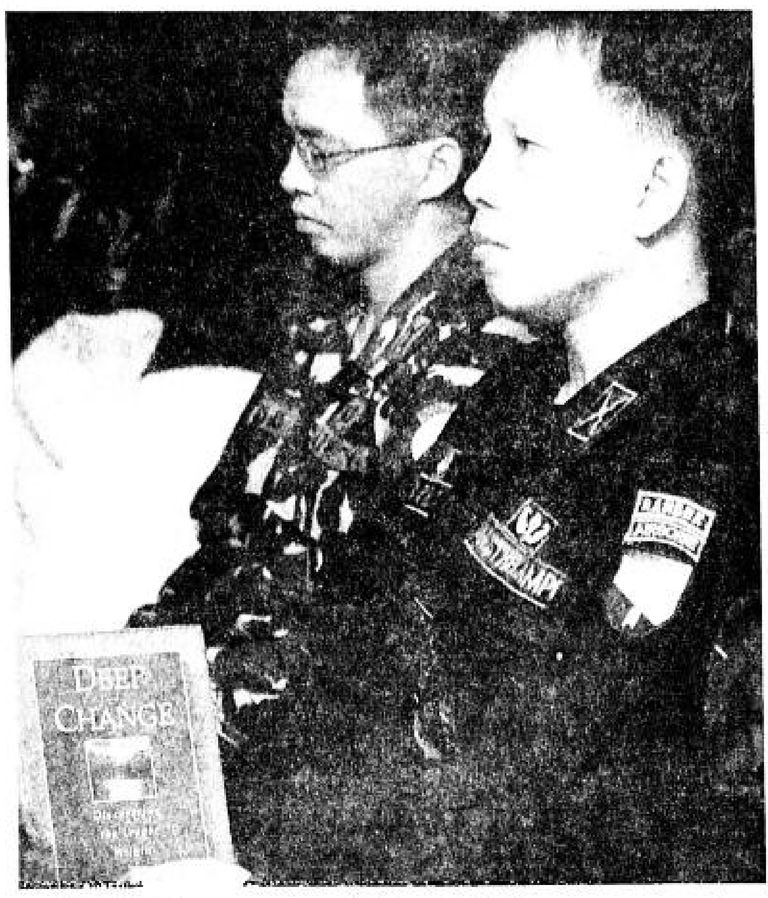
"We would be very stupid not to know who are behind these, if there are really those who are agitating from the inside," he added, refusing to name any suspects. "It could be done by anyone."

"We cannot say that it's impossible for (the manifestos) to be true, but we believe these are part of a psychological campaign to divide the military and agitate the young officers," Pangilinan said.

He said military officers, even the middle-ranked ones, have learned from the "futility" of past coup d'etat and would no longer join any uprising.

Abu reactivated the AFPCIG to monitor alleged destabilization plots and corruption within the military. The unit would report directly to him. Reports said Abu revived the unit because the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) had become "autonomous" and had gone out of the control of the military leadership.

The original AFPCIG was abolished in the early 90s because it reportedly did not warn the Aquino administration of the various coup plots being hatched against it.



ON TRIAL before a court martial, Capt. Milo Maestrecampo and other officers of the Magdalo group listen to proceedings at Camp Aguinaldo.

JOAN BONDOC

Last-hour wrangling for Magdalo plea

By Dona Pazzibugan

THE LEADERS of the Oakwood mutiny staged two years ago were nearly freed yesterday on a matter of technicality.

Twenty-eight junior military officers who led the mutiny at the Oakwood Premier Ayala Center in Makati on July 27, 2003 informed a military court yesterday that the charges against them have already prescribed.

Their lawyer, Roel Pulido said the "Magdalo" leaders could no longer be tried because they were still not arraigned two years after their alleged crime.

"The crime prescribed yesterday. What case is left to try? It is just a matter of law, not of discretion," Pulido told the court.

He cited Article 38 of the Manual for Courts Martial which he was upheld by the Supreme Court in a 1963 ruling.

But the court martial, which was headed by a new president, Maj. Gen. Vicente Guerzon Jr., shot down the Magdalo leaders' motion.

The court went into closed-door sessions several times, but always ruled that military prosecutors still have that day left to arraign all the so-called "core leaders."

"The prescription period falls on July 26, 2005 and that is today," declared court law member Lt. Col. Edmund Janda at 3 p.m.

He upheld the position of military prosecutors that what applies is Article 13 of the Civil Code of the Philippines, which provides that a period of time excludes the first day and includes the last day.

Pulido had argued that the prescription period should be counted starting on the day of the mutiny, and that since 2004 was a leap year, the two-year period expired last Monday, July 25.

Of the 29 leaders, only Lt. (S.G.) Antonio Trillanes IV had been arraigned for conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman.

He was arraigned at the last hearing on July 20. The rest were not arraigned "for lack of time."

As of 7 p.m., the 28 Magdalo leaders had not been arraigned as lawyers continued to argue the prescription period.

Pulido walked out after hearing the court's decision. He said further proceedings were "illegal."

"If the court will proceed (with the arraignment) then I have to excuse myself. The court no longer has jurisdiction over the accused," he said.

Later he told reporters he would bring their case to the Supreme Court.

The other defense lawyer, Ed Abaya, meanwhile, managed to stall the arraignment. He kept on issuing a "challenge for cause" against all six court members for lack of jurisdiction.

When interviewed, prosecutors could not explain why the Magdalo leaders were not arraigned earlier.

Col. Julius Magno, who had handled the Oakwood case since the start, blamed the defense lawyers for their "delaying tactics."

Col. Pedro Herrera-Davila said they were determined to arraign all the leaders before midnight.

Mutiny leaders mark 2nd year in detention

By Fe Zamora

CONSIDERING the time they've devoted to playing badminton, military detainees Antonio Trillanes IV, James Layug, Garry Alejano, Nick Faeldon, Milo Maestrecampo and Gerry Gambala are so fit, they could try out for the Philippine team.

This is a joke they hear often on their way to the badminton court in the Intelligence Service of Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) compound, where they are held under maximum security.

"Who knows?" the officers would retort, laughing good-naturedly at hecklers.

Exactly two years ago today, Trillanes and Layug, who hold the rank of lieutenant senior grade of the Philippine Navy, and Alejano, Faeldon, Maestracampo and Gambala, who hold the rank of captain, led nearly 300 officers and soldiers in demanding for the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The rebellious troop seized a posh Oakwood Premiere in Makati, but gave up peacefully in less than 24 hours after authorities rejected their demands.

The six are among scores of officers who face court martial proceedings for violating five Articles of War: Article 63 (insubordination and disrespect for the President); 64 (disrespect for superior officers); 67 (mutiny); 96 (conduct unbecoming an officer and gentleman, particularly relating to a serious offense of coup d'etat); and 97 (the general provision for other crimes).

Nearly 200 enlisted personnel have been released after demotion by several ranks in recent months.

Ironically, the call for Ms Arroyo's resignation has grown louder, this time on the twin issues that her family had benefited from jueteng payola and that she cheated in the May 2004 elections. She denied both accusations.

Life goes on for the mutinous officers who had been the first to call for Ms Arroyo to step down.

Whenever his twin babies would visit, Alejano, a much-awarded Marine officer who was recommended for a Medal of Valor for leading his team in a close-quarter combat with Muslim rebels in Camp Abubakar in 1999, would transform into an efficient dad, adept at preparing milk bottles and changing diapers. He would even give his daughters a bath.

"The secret is to do it fast because [when you finish with one] there is another coming up. It's like a production line," Alejano was said to have told a visitor months ago.

The Alejano twins were born in October 2003, three months after their father was detained as one of the alleged leaders of the Oakwood mutiny.

Their families are free to visit them, but only during non-alert days.

Maestracampo's family joined him last December, and the united family was given separate quarters where they could cook their own meals, according to an Isafp insider.

Trillanes' wife, Arlene, a 1997 graduate of the Philippine Military Academy, would drive all the way from Baguio City, where she lives with their two kids, to visit her husband.

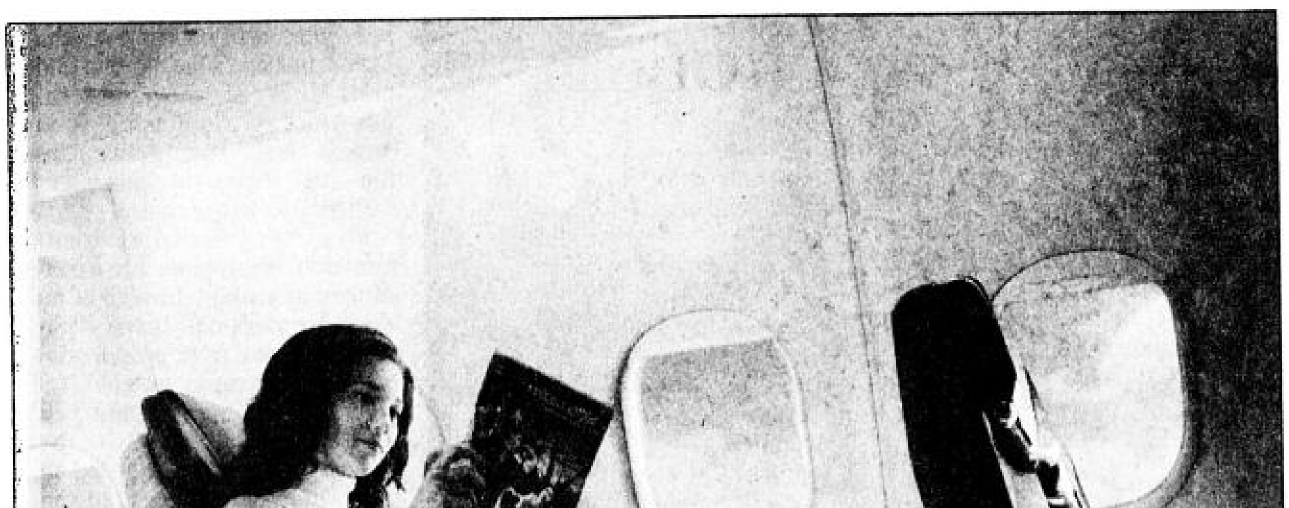
And like most young families, the officers enjoy small gatherings and barbecues. Friendly card games, even mahjong, have become welcome diversions from their monotonous life as prisoners, according to friends who have visited them.

Reading books, watching videos, cleaning up their quarters, exercising to keep fit, playing badminton – these make up their daily routine, according to friends.

"Whatever you say, they are still prisoners. That's really difficult," a friend of the officers said.

But facing media has remained a trauma for some of them.

When an officer found out that a journalist had joined them for dinner, he turned to the guest and said: "I have done my own research on media. I want to know my enemy."



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GMA bans gov't use of luxury cars

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday banned government officials from using luxury cars and ordered all state agencies to auction off all such vehicles in their fleets within two months.

An administrative order issued by Ms Arroyo directed all government offices and state-run banks, universities and corporations to observe a February 2001 presidential order that bans the "acquisition and use by all government offices of luxury vehicles." It ordered these offices to make an inventory and prepare a disposal program through "public auction or sale" of these cars.

"Compliance with this order, including final disposition of covered luxury vehicles and the turnover of proceeds, shall be completed within 60 days," the new order read.

The presidential directive did not say which models qualified as luxury vehicles, or whether the president is included in the ban.

Sales proceeds must be turned over to the National Treasury in the case of national government agencies and to the operating funds of state firms or schools.

Ms Arroyo said "in light of the present economic situation facing the country today," it was necessary for the government to "set

3 bishops with Cory during Palace call

By Leila B. Salaverria

WHILE the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines officially did not call for the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo, three prominent CBCP members were with former president Corazon Aquino in Malacañang the night before Mrs. Aquino called on Ms Arroyo to step down.

This was disclosed yesterday by Deedee Siytangco, spokesperson of Mrs. Aquino, at the Bulong Pulungan forum at the Westin Philippine Plaza.

Sytangco identified the three prelates who accompanied Mrs. Aquino to the Palace as bishops Socrates Villegas, a protege of the late Jaime Cardinal Sin, Chito Tagle of Imus and Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal.

But Siytangco said she did not know why the three were with the former president at that time.

"They were there. I don't know why," she said.

Siytangco disclosed the priests' names in the course of relating Mrs. Aquino's account that Ms Arroyo accepted the former president's decision "graciously."

"Mrs. Aquino said she took it graciously. I didn't leave in a huff. We kissed each other goodbye," she recounted, quoting Mrs. Aquino, belying earlier news reports that there was a shouting match between the two women during that Palace meeting.

Siytangco also said Mrs. Aquino disclosed that Ms Arroyo did not beg or cry, only tellling Mrs. Aquino: "I'm sorry you feel that way."

She denied reports that the two women had engaged in a shouting match.

The next day after that Palace meeting, Mrs. Aquino called a press conference to read a prepared statement calling on Ms Arroyo to make a "supreme sacrifice" by resigning voluntarily.

NO STOMACH FOR POLITICS

Rosales confirms he declined CBCP presidency

By Christian V. Esguerra

WHAT'S keeping Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales from steering the Roman Catholic Church in this time of crisis?

Rosales was elected president of the influential Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) during its 91st plenary assembly more than two weeks ago, the INQUIRER has learned.

But to the surprise of his peers, he declined the election four times, according to three highly placed sources privy to the closed-door deliberations at the Pope Pius XII Catholic Center in Manila.

The refusal paved the way for the election of Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, the outgoing CBCP vice president and another top contender to lead the country's 120 Catholic bishops.

Rosales yesterday confirmed that he had been elected. "Yes, I was, but I declined," he told reporters in an ambush interview, but did not give any reason.

Fellow bishops saw the 72-year-old Rosales as ripe for the top CBCP post considering that he now heads the powerful See of Manila, according to a senior prelate.

"He holds the leadership archdiocese and all the major issues are resolved in Manila," the source told the INQUIRER.

Rosales was also seen as one who could follow the lead of his late predecessor, Jaime Cardinal Sin, who was once concurrent Manila archbishop and CBCP president, the bishop explained. He is also expected to be the country's newest cardinal, filling the vacancy left by the death of Sin.

But all these expectations were apparently not enough to convince the soft-spoken prelate to take on the job at the CBCP.

At the very start of the election, the three INQUIRER sources said Rosales made it clear that he was not making himself available for nomination. Still, his name appeared as a top candidate.

By the third balloting, one of the sources said he emerged among the top three choices and was the undisputed winner by the fourth balloting. "Again, he begged off despite getting two-thirds of the vote," the source said.

Rosales purportedly explained that he wanted to concentrate on "Pondo ng Pinoy," a successful project encouraging Filipinos to save a centavo daily as a way of changing the predominantly apathetic approach to the poor.

Rosales' refusal in the last plenary marked the third time he begged off from leading the CBCP. He had made similar decisions in the late 1990s when he was still archbishop of Lipa.

One Church insider said the low-key prelate was probably trying to be faithful to his conviction not to meddle with politics.

"As CBCP president, he will find difficulty avoiding politics," the source told the INQUIRER.

Outgoing CBCP president Archbishop Fernando Capalla appears to share Rosales' conviction and has been generally silent and careful with his words throughout his term that started in 2003. But critics also see his attitude as a reflection of his closeness with President Macapagal-Arroyo.

A fellow bishop didn't want to comment on Rosales' political conviction – or the lack of it. "I think he's just shy," he said.

If this was the case, Rosales was far from shy when he issued a pastoral letter titled "The Unity We Need," shortly before the official CBCP position was made public.

He wrote: "Let us remember that the offended cannot simply be consoled by expressions of regret. Forgiveness does not eliminate the need for justice, nor should it block the search for truth. Genuine forgiveness demands more than an apology, and those who seek forgiveness should be ready to be called to accountability."

The letter set the tone for the Church's pastoral approach to the political crisis – one that did not side with the President but did not necessarily ignore the clamor for her resignation.

Rojas is 1st RP bishop named by Benedict

By Christian V. Esguerra

POPE Benedict XVI has appointed the first Filipino bishop under his papacy in Rev. Msgr. Jose Rojas Jr.

As bioethics expert, the 48-year-old Rojas was named auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Caceres headed by Archbishop Leonardo Legaspi, and titular bishop of Idassa.

The official announcement was contained in a July 25 letter by the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Antonio Franco, to Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla, president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines.

"Let us assure our newly elected bishop of our humble prayers for his personal and spiritual well-being and also for the successful pastoral ministry in the Archdiocese of Caceres," Franco wrote.

Rojas was executive secretary of the CBCP's office on bioethics from December 2001 to November 2003.

He was ordained priest in March 1981, earned a master's degree in Religious Education at the UST Central Seminary the following year, before flying to Belgium for another MA in Religious Studies and a doctorate in Moral Theology.

Gov't eyes scrapping of Luisita stock option

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE GOVERNMENT is ready to junk the stock distribution option and distribute to farmer-workers the 5,000-hectare Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac if investigation shows the Cojuangcos had violated the provisions for that option.

Land Reform Secretary Datu Nasser Pangandaman said Task Force Luisita, which was created last year to investigate allegations of violations of the SDO agreement, had finished its inquiry.

The task force is set to submit its recommendations this week, Pangandaman said.

"I don't want to preempt the report, but I already have in mind what we will do (if there are violations)," he said in a press briefing yesterday.

He stressed that the investigation into the situation of farmers in Hacienda Luisita was not triggered by former president Corazon C. Aquino's recent call for President Macapagal-Arroyo to resign amid political turmoil.

The former president is a member of the Cojuangco clan, whose vast landholdings are covered by the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program.

"There are speculations that the Luisita investigation is related to political developments. That's not true. We started this more than a year ago after receiving complaints from the farmers," Pangandaman said.

He said farmers had informed the Department of Land Reform that they were not receiving dividends from the company, Hacienda Luisita Inc.

AQUINO

The farmers, who were also employed as workers in the hacienda, also accused Luisita managers of unfair labor practice.

"But that's for the DoLE to decide," Pangandaman said of the financial package for workers.

During two referendums in 1989, 96 percent of the almost 6,000 farmers in Hacienda Luisita voted for the SDO instead of their actual acquisition of lands under the CARP.

Hacienda Luisita Inc. lawyer Vigor Mendoza said the company was open to DLR action on the farmers' complaints as long as this would benefit the workers.

"We're submitting ourselves to whatever the DLR decides... Some of the workers think they can earn more if they get the land, but we're leaving it to the DLR," Mendoza told reporters.

He said the HLI has not given dividends because it has not been earning for years. The company, paralyzed by a violent strike and dispersal in November last year, remains non-operational.

He said HLI submits an annual compliance report and gives three percent of the gross production to workers as agreed in the SDO contract.

"We just want the process to be clear. We want workers to be treated equally and fairly. Some may not be amenable to this, what do you do with them?" Mendoza asked.

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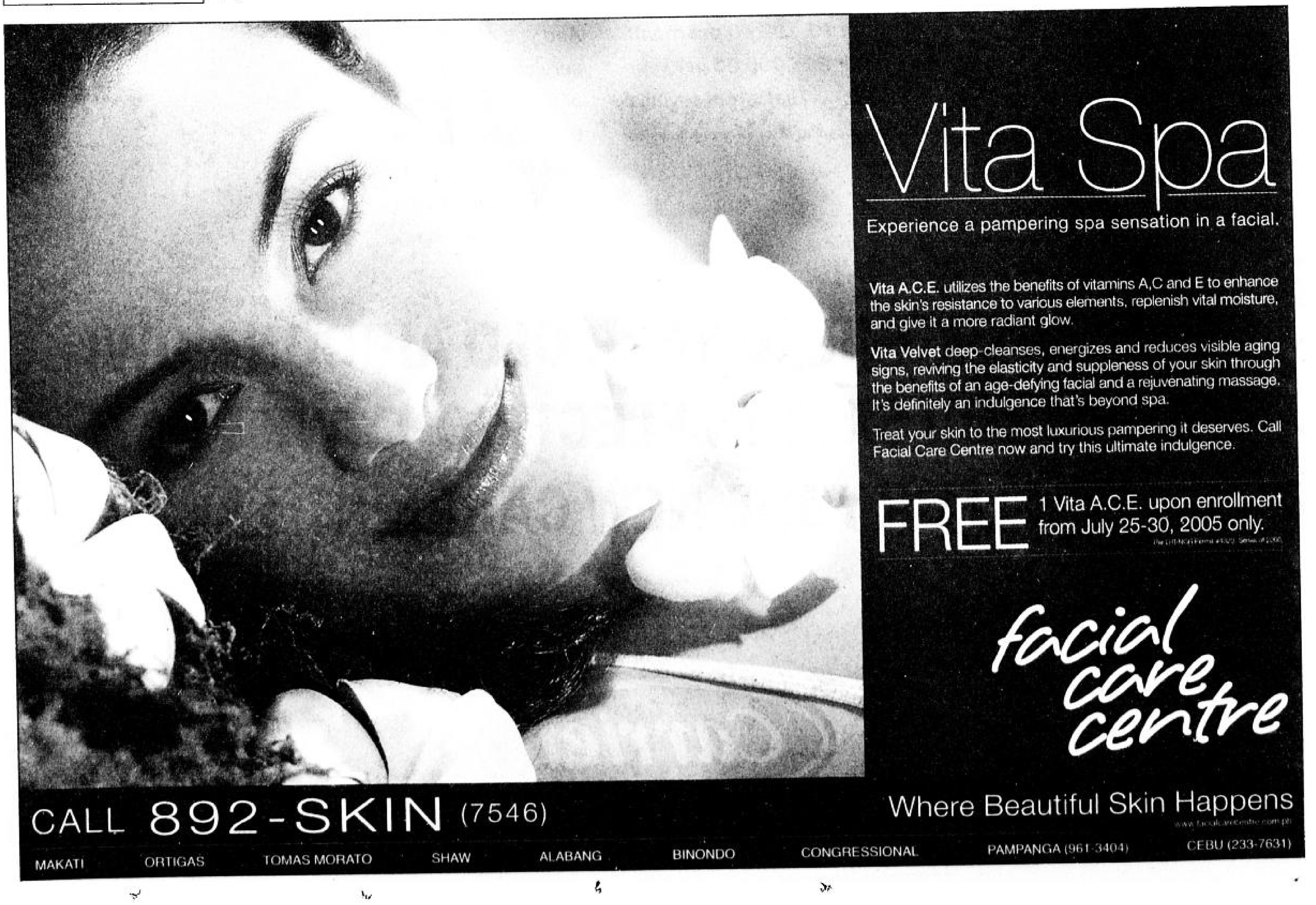

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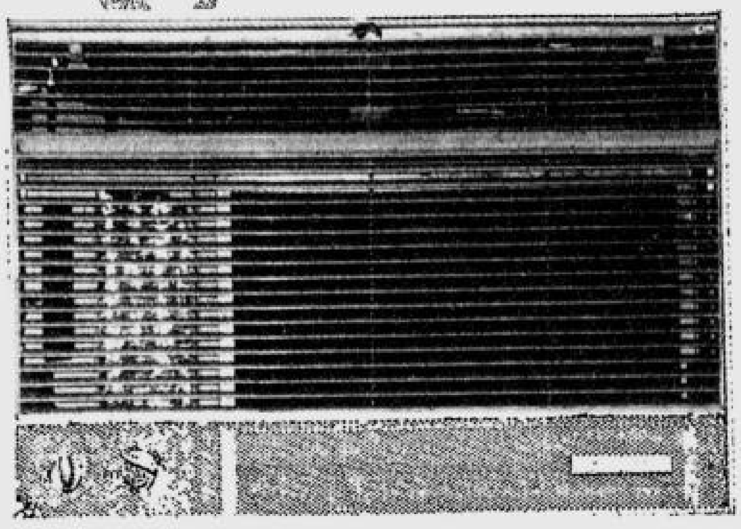

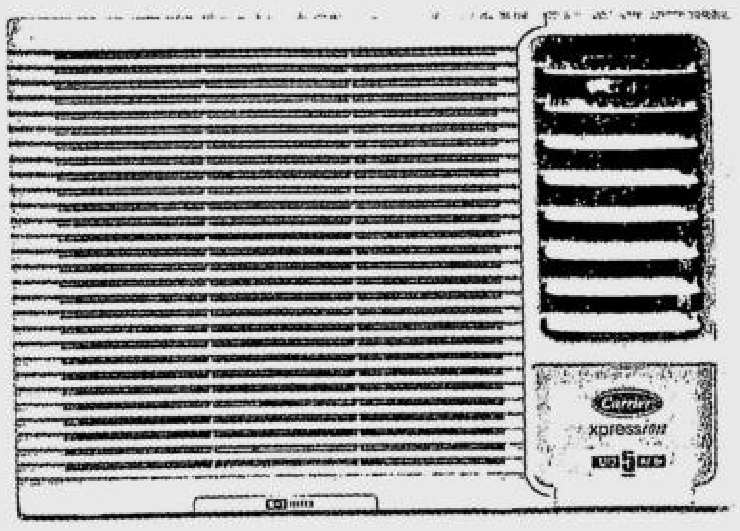

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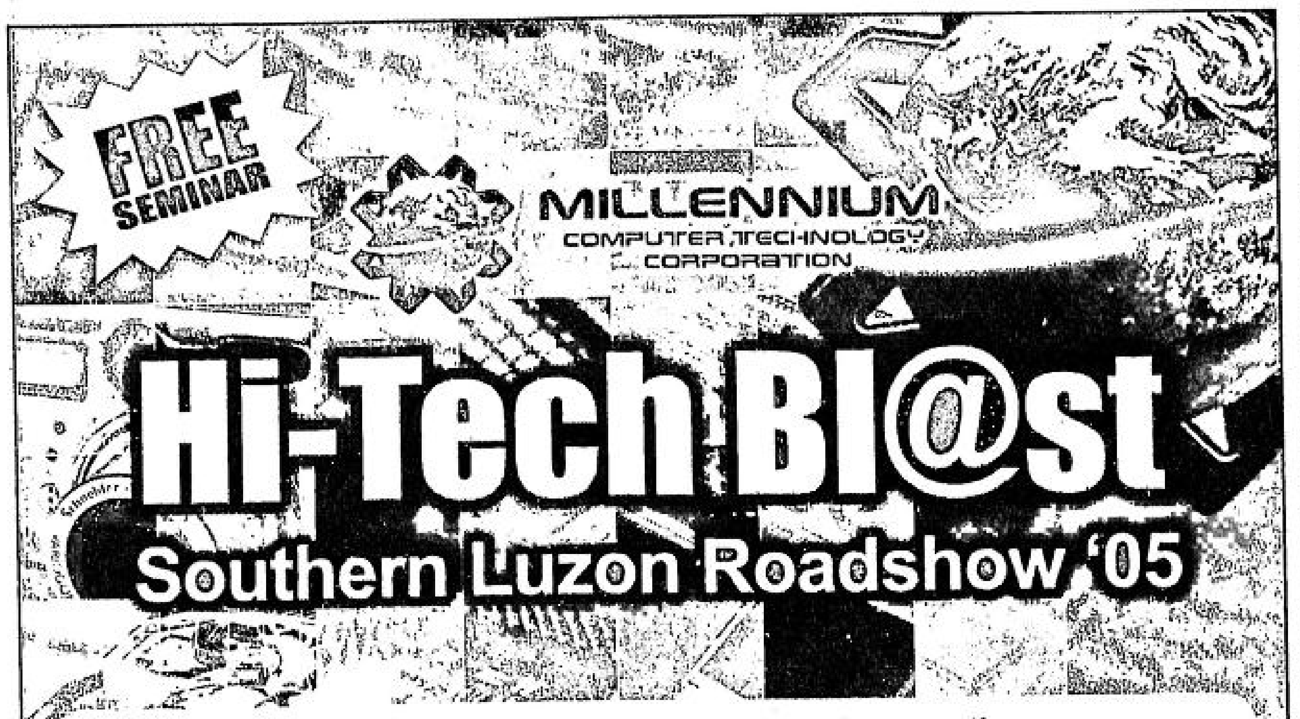
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THE BUREAU of Immigration yesterday reported that its income for the first half of the year stood at P635.2 million, up 9.6 percent from the P579.6 million it earned in the same period last year.

This was 14.18 percent higher than its target of P556.3 million.

"This is a good sign that foreigners are again returning to the Philippines," Commissioner Alipio Fernandez Jr. said. The BI gets the bulk of its revenue from visa fees. Arrivals increased 15 percent from January to June this year compared to the same period last year.

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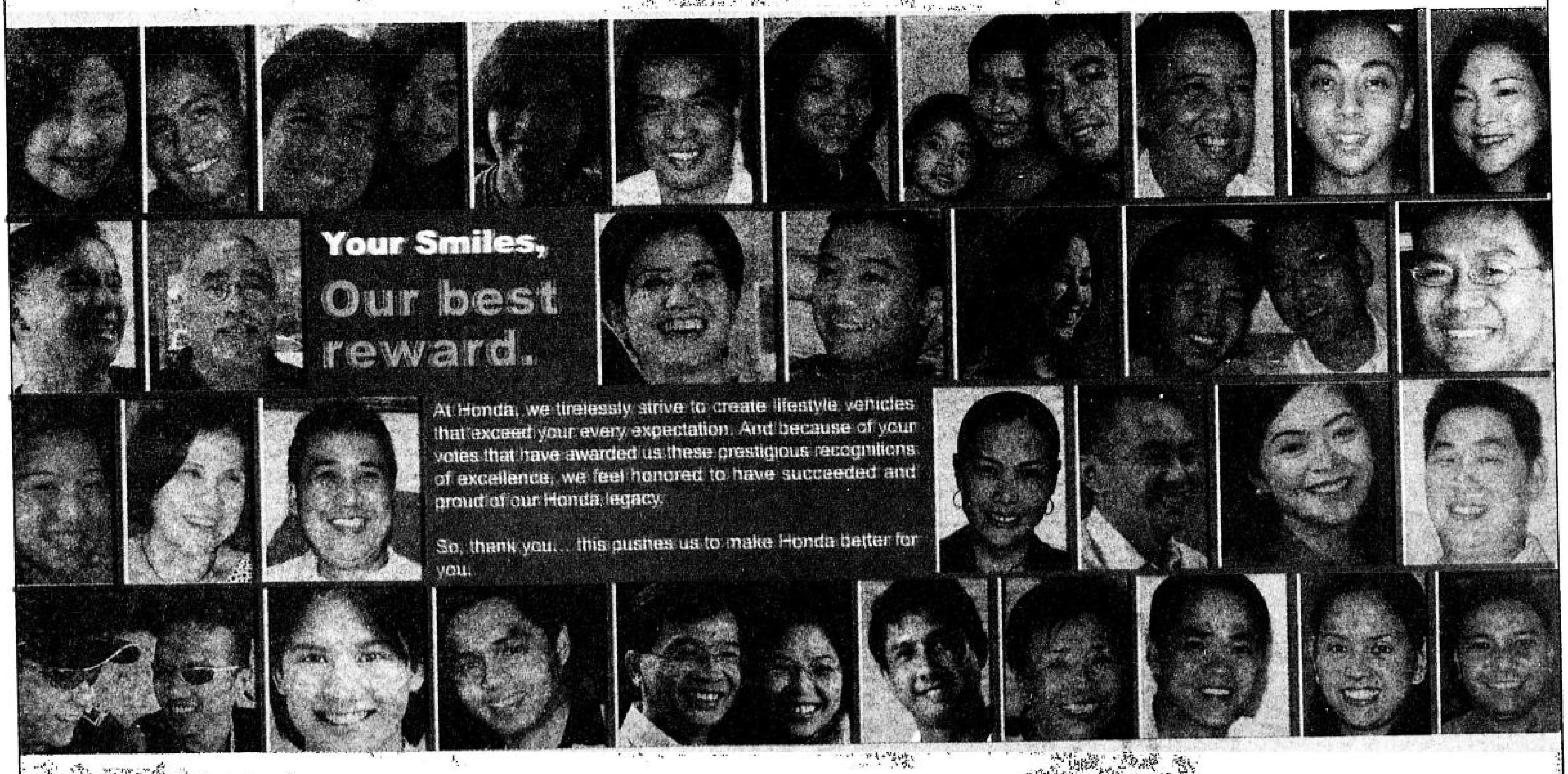

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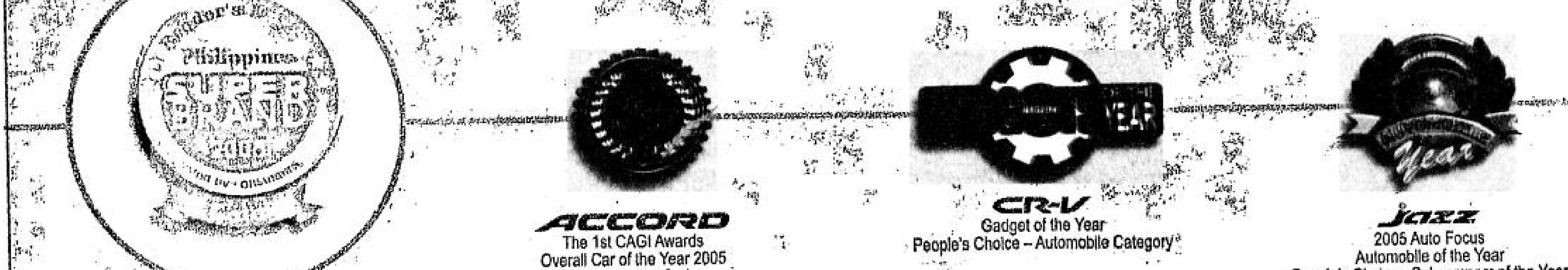

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Senate won't Cha-cha

From page A1

would be easy to "kill" any move to change the Charter, adding that the votes of six senators were all that was needed.

"The proponents of Charter change should forget it altogether because the members are just not there to support it," Arroyo said.

"If there are six senators that will block it, it's dead," Arroyo said. He pointed out that at least half of the Senate membership opposed tinkering with the Charter.

"What is the picture? We elected 12 senators last year—seven administration and five opposition senators. Their terms of office will not end till 2010 or five years from now. Can we reasonably expect them to shorten their term just so the country can shift to parliamentary?" Arroyo said.

The 12 senators are Rodolfo Biazon, Pia Cayetano, Miriam Defensor-Santiago, Gordon, Manuel "Lito" Lapid, Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. and Mar Roxas from the administration and Enrile, Jamby Madrigal, Alfredo Lim, Aquilino Pimentel Jr., Luisa "Loi" Ejercito and her son Jinggoy Estrada of the opposition.

Not feasible

Arroyo said he also did not think the senators would agree to become automatic members of parliament because their powers would be diminished under the setup.

"Why the talks of amending the Constitution if it is not feasible? If the idea to harness it as a distraction to the present political crisis, then that is something else," Arroyo said.

Santiago, a member of the pro-administration bloc, said it was too early to change the 9-year-old Charter.

"If the Constitution is not permanent, Charter change would lead to more political instability. The Constitution should not be worked upon by the temper of the times. It should not rise or fall with the tide of events," Santiago said.

"Legislators must not be distracted at this time with Charter change. I hope that it is not a diversionary tactic to erase from the people's mind the most pressing issue at the moment—the impeachment," said Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr.

Change like a nuclear option

"The country is already deeply divided, then you will add this very divisive issue. In my view this Charter change is like a nuclear option. You don't need to destroy everything just because you have problems with something," said Roxas.

Angara, true to previous form, said he would strongly campaign for Charter amendments through a constituent assembly.

"The prevailing system is a slow motion route. We need political restructuring for us to advance and develop," Angara said.

Jinggoy Estrada also lambasted Ms Arroyo's proposal, saying: "You are the problem Mrs. Arroyo and not the Constitution. Don't blame the system."

"I believe that we should address the crucial issue of the day—that is political division. The impeachment process cannot be swept under the rug," Drilon said. He said Filipinos would like to know the truth behind the wiretapping controversy involving Ms Arroyo and Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano.

Disclosure of the wiretap prompted the worst political crisis to hit the 4-year-old Arroyo administration that was swept into power in the aftermath of the impeachment trial and subsequent ouster of President Joseph Estrada.

What is the truth?

"People would like to know what is the truth insofar as the Garcillano tapes are concerned, insofar as the 'jueteng' scandal is concerned," Drilon said.

Pimentel, a staunch advocate of federalism, also said the chances of the proposal getting approved in the Senate were slim.

"It will be difficult because we know it is only a ploy to buy time for her," he said in an interview. He said former President Fidel V. Ramos and other politicians were "manipulating" Ms Arroyo so she could "prolong her stay in Malacañang to the prejudice of the people."

At a news conference yesterday, Ramos repeated earlier statements that he was not interested in becoming prime minister and challenged Congress to bar past presidents from taking up any posts in a parliamentary government.

"They better put it in the law if they don't believe me and put me in jail if I break that law," Ramos said before his departure for Kuala Lumpur to attend the Third Asian Economic Summit.

"I see nothing wrong about discussing (the move to amend the Charter) as long as this does not drown out the impeachment complaint and the search for truth," Villar said.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said Ms Arroyo did not offer any timeline in proposing to amend the Constitution. He said the President was leaving it to Congress.

Campaign

"I heard that the President will actively engage in explaining the need for Charter change during her visits to the countryside," Bunye told reporters. "She will bring this case to the people," he said.

Asked about opposition statements that a Charter change would give Ms Arroyo a graceful exit, Bunye said: "This is not a matter of graceful exit but this is a matter of pushing through political reforms."

Bunye said some lawmakers had been pushing for constitutional changes even before the current political crisis. "In view of the urgency and importance of this proposal, they would find time to discuss this," Bunye added.

Rep. Constantino Jaraula of Cagayan de Oro said the House would start debates next week on the proposed Charter changes. "We're just waiting for the committee on rules to place this on the Order of Business," he said.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said regardless of the mode, people have no choice but to had either relatives or friends of incumbent congressmen or the current crop of lawmakers amending the Constitution.

In a constitutional convention, he said "congressmen would certainly put up their candidates, their brothers, wives or whatever."

"Who will run in Iloilo City, for example, without my blessing?" said Gonzalez. The district is now represented by his son.

Squid tactic

Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales said amending the Constitution could be compared to building a new house without driving away the old inhabitants.

"You are improving the house but you are not improving the character of the people," he told reporters. "We are changing the laws but we are not changing the people who are making the laws."

Archbishop Oscar Cruz of Lingayen and Dagupan described the President's move as a "squid tactic" meant to divert attention from mounting calls for her resignation.

"Such tactic is too shallow to be taken seriously," he told reporters. "She can't just make it appear that the problem is with the system of government, not her."

"The presidency has no need of lies and liberty. Those who blindly and incriminately defend the President are the very ones who undermine the credibility and authority of the office," said Bro. Manuel de Leon, superior of the Marist Brothers of the Philippines. *With reports from Armand N. Nocum, Christine O. Avendaño, Nikko Dizon, Philip C. Tubeza, Leila B. Salaverria, Christian V. Esguerra, Delfin T. Mallari Jr. of PDI Southern Luzon Bureau, Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes of PDI Northern Luzon Bureau and Anthony S. Alada of PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Madam President, do you love your country?

By Michael Lim Ubac

"I CAN say that I love my country. But how about you, Madam President, do you love your country?"

With these biting words, House Minority Leader Francis Escudero yesterday echoed the prevailing sentiment among pro-impeachment lawmakers that President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address was nothing but a litany of "generalities" which failed to inspire her countrymen.

Escudero said Ms Arroyo squandered her opportunity to tell the whole truth by keeping silent on the "Hello Garci" and "jueteng" scandals, which had triggered the impeachment case against her.

By refusing to show the "complete picture" of the state of the country under her watch, she had again lied to the nation, said the lawmaker.

"I seriously question if she still loves this country. But I doubt it. I hope you'll find it in your heart to step aside," Escudero added.

Lawmakers from both sides of the political divide argued over Ms Arroyo's admission that she was presiding over a divided country and that the present political system had already degenerated and might have reached its limits.

Negros Oriental Rep. Jacinto Paras said in an interview that there was only one Philippines, one presidency and one Filipino people.

"She had divided the nation, stole the presidency and failed her people," said Paras.

Tarlac Rep. Jesli Lapus shot back in a text message:

"She hit the nail on the head. The Philippines is a permanent-potential case because of its dysfunctional political system," Lapus said.

Defending the absence in the Sona of any direct reference to the controversies hounding Ms Arroyo, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said she had already spoken about them, hence, there was no need for her to refer to them in her address. *With a report from Christine O. Avendaño*

'Hello Garci' . . .

From page A1

"She would have debased the Sona if she used it to defend herself from the charges," Tiglao said.

A top Malacañang official said Ms Arroyo had always felt that the election cheating scandal, the "jueteng" charges against her family, and her views on the impeachment case and on the formation of a truth commission were "personal matters" better discussed in another forum and not in the Sona.

"These issues are all personal attacks against the President and all these charges have not been proved in court. Why should she discuss them?" said the official, who is one of Ms Arroyo's closest advisers.

Tiglao said that in crafting her speech, Ms Arroyo stuck to the concept of the original Sona—the US State of the Union Address.

"The Sona is the podium for the Chief Executive—as the leader of the nation—to explain where she wants to bring the country towards, and to provide Filipinos her analysis of the basic strengths and weaknesses of the nation. It is a leader's role to point to the nation's strengths and gains so as to inspire them to unite and move forward," Tiglao said.

"The impeachment process and hopefully, the Truth Commission, are the proper fora for the President to answer the charges against her."

Contrary to criticisms that Ms Arroyo glossed over the political crisis, Tiglao said this was implicit in the President's speech.

Midnight rehearsal

"Even with what is touted as a 'political crisis,' we should not lose sight of the task of moving the economy forward, that the economy should not be the collateral damage on a country poised for takeoff," Tiglao said.

The Malacañang source said Ms Arroyo read a draft of her Sona in front of her Cabinet members on Friday night in a meeting which lasted up to midnight.

By that time, the President had basically finished the structure of her speech and only the language needed further polishing.

The source said that none of the Cabinet advisers asked why Ms Arroyo had left out the political crisis, including the "Hello Garci" tape and the impeachment plans.

When she finally spoke before the nation on Monday, it was as though there never was a Virgilio Garcillano in the President's life.

During the weekend, Ms Arroyo kept in touch with her Cabinet officials and advisers to get their inputs on specific parts of her Sona.

She had her final rehearsal on Sunday in the study room in the presence of her best friend Tomas I. Alcantara, former Communications Director Silvestre Afable, and famed director Lupita Kashiwara, who has been stage-managing all her media appearances.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye told reporters that Ms Arroyo decided to keep her Sona short because she "wanted to focus on her main message."

One unhappy ally

"If she included a lot of things in the Sona, she might lose the impact of her principal message, that it's time to start debate on Charter change."

But one of Ms Arroyo's staunchest allies was unhappy.

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, who also gave his advice on the Sona, was aghast at the final version.

"I will continue to defend her but that Sona is beyond defense. It's another wasted opportunity to advance her pieces on the chessboard. We could have reached out to the rest of the world outside with ideas that would get them on board. Now, the ship is sinking," Salceda lamented.

Contortionist needed

Salceda was frustrated that Ms Arroyo devoted 80 percent of the Sona to Cha-cha to "indulge the primal instincts of loyal governors in the gallery for federalism, and the intellectual fetish of congressmen in the hall for parliamentary and constituent assembly."

"It (the Charter change) is just a major irritant because we all know she can't get 18 senators to support the plan and it takes two to cha cha," Salceda said.

"Cha-cha cannot obviate and must not impede an impeachment process seen by many investors as the first step on our way out of the crisis. It's just too surreal. It would take a Mongolian contortionist to sink the message in a quite skeptical mood."

Salceda added: "Stand-alone, not placed in the context of a coherent road map, it would be her version of the road to nowhere. It just increases the uncertainties for businesses and bondholders."

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Chinese envoy allays fears of stronger RP-Sino ties

By Volt Contreras

WITH the United States growing wary of a rising China, Beijing's top diplomat in Manila has maintained that his country's warming ties with the Philippines, an old US ally, was "not directed against any other third country."

Chinese Ambassador to the Philippines Wu Hongbo also stressed that China's phenomenal economic growth "will not impose any threat to our neighboring countries."

"On the contrary, it will bring to our neighbors a vast potential market and rare development opportunities," Wu said in a speech last week before the Manila Rotary Club.

"Sino-Filipino friendship, not directed against any other third country, and consistent with the historical trend of maintaining peace and promoting development, will not only be beneficial to our two countries but also be conducive to promoting peace and development in our region," the diplomat said in a July 21 speech posted Sunday on the Chinese embassy website.

Wu made the remarks on the day reports quoted the US government as saying that China's military buildup, driven by a booming economy, already poses a long-term threat to the region and goes beyond earlier threats to attack Taiwan. This assessment was contained in the just-released Pentagon annual report.

Manila and Beijing last month marked the 30th anniversary of their diplomatic ties, with both hailing the relationship as entering a "new golden age."

This coziness has caused a "significant strain" of RP-US ties, according to Washington-based think tank Heritage Foundation, that Foreign Affairs Secretary Alberto Romulo had to explain Manila's position on China in a forum during a Washington DC tour last month.

Early this year, the Philippines made an unprecedented move of securing military aid from China – in the form of engineering equipment – while agreeing to hold regular defense security consultations with the Asian powerhouse.

"In recent years, increased bilateral military exchanges have also helped to enhance the mutual trust between our armed forces," Wu said in his speech.

Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz, he recalled, visited China last November and the two countries held their first defense and security consultation this year.

With "political trust" between the two countries now enhanced by their leaders through recent visits, Wu said improving RP-China ties "is not only consistent with the wishes of our two peoples but also in conformity with the fundamental interests of our two nations."

Kidnapping not yet thing of the past, GMA told

By Luige A. del Puerto

FAR FROM being a "thing of the past" as Ms Arroyo declared in her State of the Nation Address (Sona), there has been a resurgence of kidnapping cases during the last few weeks.

Between July 6 and July 17 this year alone, the anti-crime group Citizens Action Against Crime has reported five cases of kidnapping for ransom. Even the police has confirmed that kidnapping is far from over.

"From June 17 to June 18, [we recorded] seven cases," said Teresita Ang-See, head of the CAAC and an adviser to the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force.

"These [cases] coincided with the political crisis [in the country]," she said, adding that the numbers showed that if the police were distracted from their work, criminals took advantage of the situation.

Asked to comment on Ms Arroyo's claims that the authorities had virtually licked the kidnapping menace, Ang-See blurted out: "How we wish it were so. Unfortunately, it is not."

Neither up nor down

Even the Philippine National Police's records contradicted Ms Arroyo's statement.

According to police records, there was neither a decrease nor an increase in the number of kidnapping cases during the first six months of this year compared to the same period last year.

"From January to June (2005), we recorded 16 cases. It was the same last year," PNP spokesperson Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil said, quoting statistics from the Presidential Anti-Crime Emergency Response.

Even PNP chief Director General Arturo Lomibao, who was happy that his commander in chief mentioned the accomplishments of law enforcers, appeared to have mixed up his numbers.

In a press conference in the morning, Lomibao said there was a "decrease of 29 percent" in the KFR cases during the first six months of this year compared to the first six months of last year.

Rising trend

Asked why Ms Arroyo described KFR as a "thing of the past" when the decrease was just "29 percent," Lomibao said it was probably her "figurative way" of comparing the situations in 2004 and 2003.

"But if you scrutinize the statistics for the last few weeks, the trend is rising," Lomibao admitted.

"It means comparing or reviewing the figures before the last two months – because it was zero in April – there have been kidnapping cases during the last two months," he said.

Lomibao, who is also head of the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force, quickly conferred with officials to address the resurgence of KFR cases.

Echoing Ang-See, he blamed it on the political troubles of the country.

"These lawless elements, if they see that we're focused on the mass actions, they are emboldened to ride on the situation. We will see. We will review our statistics," Lomibao said.

But was Ms Arroyo appraised of the real picture?

"I'm sure she wouldn't have [included] it in her Sona if she knew [the real picture]," Ang-See said.

Without citing specifics, she said the first three months of the year had been actually "still quite good."

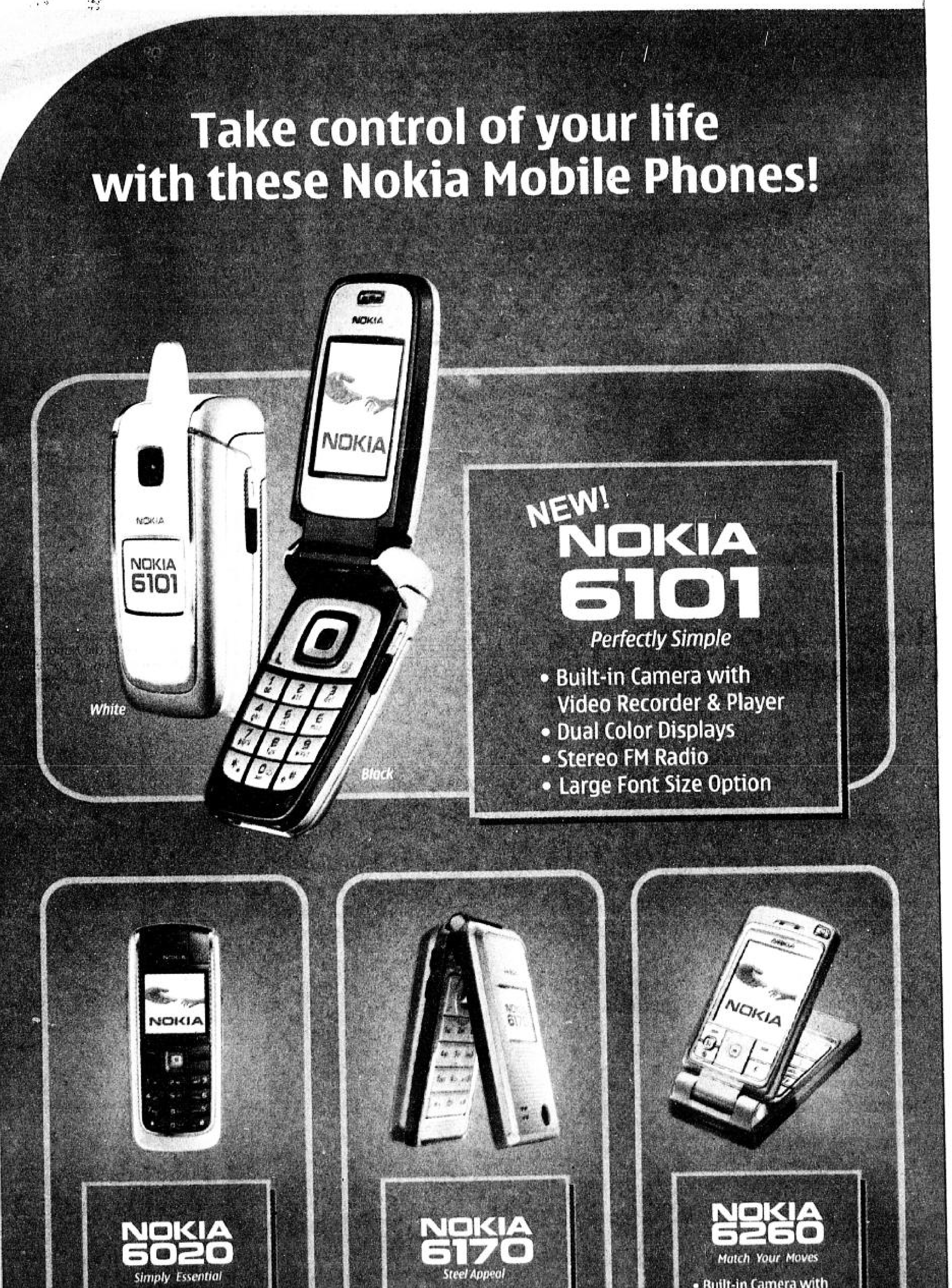
Ang-See put forward another theory why Ms Arroyo made this claim on Monday. The people close to her who had the real information might have withheld it.

"Because she has many problems, they don't want to add [another] bad news... [But] it's been very bad," she said.

However, Bataoil said the police had stepped up their anti-KFR efforts during the last four years.

"From a high of 99 cases in 2001, it was down to 29 cases in 2004," he said. "That's a significant decrease."

The police said they had busted organized crime groups, including that of former Rep. Dennis Roldan, who was accused of masterminding the kidnapping of a 3-year-old Chinese-Filipino.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House leaders clash on impeachment rules

From page A1

House justice committee scrutinize the impeachment complaint with regard to form and substance. The Constitution says the justice committee must decide within 60 days on the complaint's merit.

Rep. Simeon Datumanong, a former justice secretary who now chairs the justice committee, said that with the failure of the minority to gather 79 signatures, the lengthy process of impeachment should be followed.

Datumanong cited Article 11 Sec. 3 (2) of the Constitution which mandates the justice committee to evaluate the impeachment complaint within 60 session days before reporting this out to the plenary for approval of its findings.

The majority has already prepared a seven-page "Rules of Procedure in Impeachment Proceedings." The minority, however, feels the draft rules contravene the expressed intent of the Constitution as these provide a longer route to impeachment.

In a press conference, Cayetano said the Constitution provided shorter route to an impeachment trial: "In case the verified complaint or resolution of impeachment is filed by at least one-third of all the members of the House, the same shall constitute the Articles of Impeachment, and trial by the Senate shall forthwith proceed."

Datumanong insisted that his committee was constitutionally mandated to ascertain the sufficiency in form and substance of the impeachment case complaint by Lozano and amended on Monday by 42 lawmakers.

Administration Representatives Marcelino Libanan and Salacnib Baterina echoed Datumanong's line of reasoning, saying the Constitution "which rules out the automatic transmission of the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate for trial if it was not filed with the requisite one-third backing of all House members."

The two lawmakers said that since the impeachment complaint had been already transmitted to the justice committee by Speaker Jose de Venecia, the minority could not shorten the process even if it could gather the needed signatures in the course of the committee hearings.

Thus, they said the minority would have to wait for the report of the committee which will be submitted to the plenary for consideration.

Fair rules

At a press conference, Cayetano and fellow opposition Rep. Imee Marcos said the minority only wanted "fair and objective rules."

"I'm hopeful that the majority will carefully study the rules, and not come up with tailor-fit rules to favor the administration," said Marcos.

Should the minority gather 79 signatures, "we hope the transmittal of the complaint to the Senate will be ministerial or automatic," she added.

Cayetano said the House should adopt the same rules during impeachment proceedings against former President Joseph Estrada and Chief Justice Hilario Davide.

Amid coup rumors and opposition attempts to stir up another "people power," the impeachment bid is seen as the last constitutional stand in the scandal hounding Ms Arroyo, who has refused to step down. Her worst crisis erupted over allegations that she rigged last year's closely fought election.

"This is the last hope of so many people," said Rep. Roilo Golez, Ms Arroyo's former national security adviser who recently defected from her camp.

"When it's obvious that the process is being subverted and the outcome is contrary to people's expectations, it may radicalize some sectors," Golez warned.

The amended impeachment complaint accused Ms Arroyo of election fraud, corruption and misuse of government resources to finance her campaign. It claims the 58-year-old US-educated economist can be impeached on at least four constitutional grounds, including betrayal of public trust—a catch-all offense that could bring down the President just on strong indication of official misbehavior.

The main charges center on wiretapped recordings of 15 phone calls in which Ms Arroyo purportedly asked an election commissioner to ensure she would win by at least a million votes.

It is unclear whether the opposition can use the recordings—reportedly made by military intelligence agents—as evidence because they were illegally obtained.

Return to streets

"If they bastardize the process, we'll return to the streets," Cayetano said.

Pitfalls are everywhere. The most glaring example was the blunder of pro-administration lawmakers that catapulted Ms Arroyo to power more than four years ago.

During a crucial stage of Estrada's impeachment trial, his dominant allies in the Senate refused to open an envelope with reported evidence of massive corruption by him. Prosecutors walked out on live television. Aquilino Pimentel, then the trial's presiding officer, resigned as Senate President.

The scene infuriated Filipinos, who headed to the Edsa Shrine for the start of the "people power" revolt that toppled Estrada days later.

Golez warned that history could repeat itself.

If the impeachment process is subverted, "people could feel so frustrated they might resort to steps outside of the Constitution," he said.

Malacañang welcomed the filing of an impeachment complaint against Ms Arroyo but dismissed the case as "weak."

"We welcome the filing of the impeachment charges against the President," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in a statement.

"It seems, however, that the proponents themselves feel they have a weak case. This is evident in their premature move of threatening to resort to extraconstitutional means should they fail," Bunye said, calling on the opposition "to follow the rules and accept the consequences of their move."

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the impeachment bid "should not be in the way of governance ... (and) should not divert her focus, because then economic management will suffer."

"Let the impeachment (run) its due course ... and the President continue to focus her efforts in her government," he said. *With reports from AP, AFP and Reuters*

Palace embarks on propaganda blitz

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

AFTER being virtually cooped up in Malacañang for nearly two months, President Macapagal-Arroyo, along with her Cabinet, is embarking on a propaganda blitz to rally support for her call for charter change.

Her image battered by political scandals, Ms Arroyo set to embark on a provincial tour to generate mass support for her proposal for the country's shift to a parliamentary system.

Officials said she had also agreed to let her Cabinet officials be more aggressive in explaining government policies to media—a turnaround from her policy of centralizing information dissemination from Malacañang.

"I heard the President saying she will actively engage in explaining the need for charter change in her visits to the countryside. She will bring this case to the people, and she is prepared to explain directly to the people," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in a briefing.

Ms Arroyo is also set to hold today her first press conference since June 6.

Bunye said Ms Arroyo planned to make other media appearances in the coming weeks to accommodate requests for interviews.

Longer leash

She is now ready to meet the media once or twice a month, Bunye said.

Ms Arroyo has shunned live media interviews since the "Hello Garci" tape on her alleged involvement in electoral fraud exploded in print last month.

In recent weeks, she has used taped television or radio broadcasts to make public announcements and limited her appearances to government-controlled television and radio networks.

Asked if Ms Arroyo had decided to drop her micromanagement style of running state affairs, Bunye said: "That is the general direction she is taking."

"It's not an automatic mode but the President will just give general directions to the Cabinet and she will give them more leeway in managing their different departments," Bunye said.

With the President giving them a longer leash, Bunye said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita had signed an executive order "encouraging all Cabinet secretaries to be more pro-active as far as media" was concerned.

GONZALEZ

BONCODIN

Gonzalez says opposition could be using gov't funds

From page A1

cal executives were making a beeline to Malacañang because projects and cash incentives were being dangled at them.

Instead, he said it was the opposition which could be using government funds in their campaign to oust Ms Arroyo.

Gonzalez said he had a list of party-list congressmen who reportedly got a hefty sum of their pork barrel funds from the Department of Budget and Management shortly before Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin resigned her post.

"I have a list of releases to party-list representatives who were issued cash allocations from their PDAF (Priority Development Assistance Fund)," he told reporters.

Leftists favored?

Asked if he was saying that Boncodin could be involved in the alleged scheme, Gonzalez replied: "She released [PDAF] faster to the leftists, which were not enjoyed by [other congressmen]."

"Why were they favored?" he asked.

Pressed to identify those on the list, Gonzalez named only one—Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo, who supposedly received P10 million.

Asked how he knew this, Gonzalez said: "I have a list of the releases and my son [Raul] is not on the list, that's why I am angry."

Raul Jr. is a representative of Lakas in the Lower House.

Through the storm

Gonzalez earlier this month stirred a tempest because of perceived offensive remarks she made about former President Corazon Aquino and her daughter Kris.

Kris Aquino later said that Ms Arroyo apologized to her for Gonzalez's statements and reported the President as saying that she rebuked her justice secretary.

Gonzalez said that with the support of congressmen and local executives, Ms Arroyo seemed to have made it through the political storm buffeting the country since the threatened massive protests and walkouts to coincide with her State of the Nation Address did not materialize.

"She's breathing more easy now," Gonzalez said.

He said Ms Arroyo was "cheerful" yesterday, buoyed by the warm reception for her in Congress and the support of the local executives.

Women for GMA

"It was some sort of a watershed," he said of the support of the mayors, governors and other local executives for Ms Arroyo.

"I think we are in for a longer haul," he said.

Several civil society leaders also expressed support for Ms Arroyo and said she should not resign.

Evelyn Kilayko, a women's group leader who helped collect signatures for the impeachment of former President Joseph Estrada, backed Ms Arroyo's call for a constituent assembly to effect Charter change.

"If we want immediate reform, that's the best way to do it as long as the people are vigilant," she said during a Bulong Pulungan forum.

Angie Barrera, an Assumption College professor who once had Ms Arroyo for a student, said the Constitution and the laws must be followed.

She said people should not prejudge the lawmakers who would be part of the assembly.

"We should stop judging who should or should not be there," Barrera said.

Lawyer and businesswoman Loida Nicolas-Lewis said people who opposed Ms Arroyo's rule could be sexist, recalling how Corazon Aquino was confronted with coup attempts when she was the President.

"They can't stand that she's a woman and she's the leader of the country," she said.

She said she believed Ms Arroyo was tough enough to weather the present crisis. *With a report from Leila B. Salaverria*

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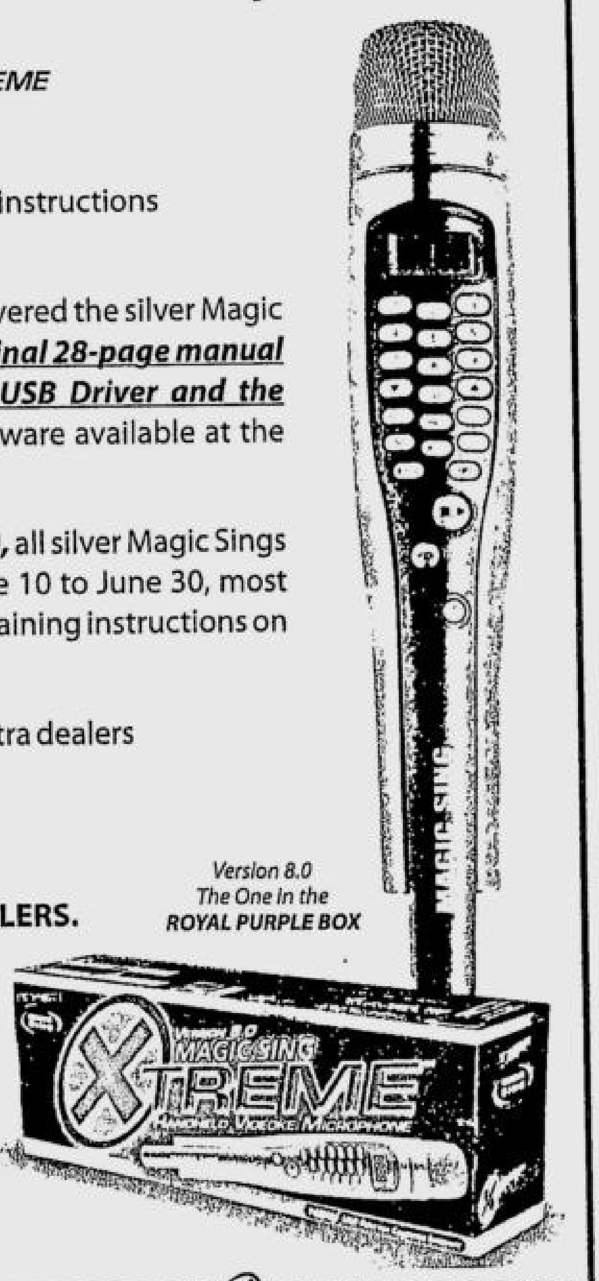

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GMA allies packed House with supporters, say foes

From page A1

the Nation Address (Sona) on Monday.

"I would be lying if I said it was not a difficult situation but it was my duty as Senate President to receive the President and I opened the session on behalf of the Senate," Drilon said.

"But it's not in the Constitution that I should clap," said Drilon.

Drilon joined a group of senior Malacañang officials, business and political leaders during a tense 24-hour period on July 8 in a bid to force Ms Arroyo to resign over election fraud charges. Ms Arroyo has denied manipulating the vote.

Drilon sat through the 23-minute Sona, oblivious to the delirious clapping of the President's allies led by Speaker Jose de Venecia. Ms Arroyo's speech was applauded 33 times and given five standing ovations.

'Hakot' crowd

"I performed my duty to the best of my ability. That (applauding) was not part of my job description," Drilon said.

Opposition lawmakers charged that the House leadership did not only bring in a "hakot" crowd that wildly cheered Ms Arroyo but also filled empty seats of minority members with "bogus congressmen."

Environment Secretary Michael Defensor was seen occupying one assembly seat.

"It was a bogus Congress listening to a bogus President," said Rep. Rolex Suplico of Iloilo. He said De Venecia had earlier given assurance that empty seats of representatives would not be filled.

Even the gallery was packed with members of the ruling Lakas-CMD, local government executives and businessmen with government dealings, opposition lawmakers said.

Overkill

"It was an overkill. There was no need to chant 'GMA, GMA, GMA,' knowing that they all benefit from her," said Cibac party-list Rep. Joel Villanueva.

Drilon's frosty behavior toward the President drew praises from detained President Joseph Estrada's son, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, who congratulated him for his "fortitude and forbearance."

"You may have been isolated in that assembly, but your demeanor there, disappointed yet dignified, expressed the very sentiments of your real constituency, the throng of our people outside, shunted out and forcibly barred from joining that elitist gallery," Senator Estrada said.

Drilon said he was also disappointed at the President's failure to discuss the issues that spawned her gravest political crisis and her stand on the impeachment proceedings in the House.

Who started the crisis?

"I was expecting more, let's put it that way. I was expecting that she would confront frontally the issue of impeachment. I was hoping she would tell our people how we can resolve this political crisis engulfing our country today," Drilon said.

Drilon disagreed with Ms Arroyo that the political system was the cause of the country's woes.

"It is not we or the people who started this political crisis. This political crisis came about, first of all, because some members of her family are involved in 'jueteng' and, second, the Garcillano tapes which gave doubts to the legitimacy of the elections," Drilon said.

He said he also wanted to hear what the President's stand was on the impeachment process initiated against her.

Drilon, who stands to lose his Senate post after his breakaway, spoke to reporters after a caucus of the majority. Senate President Pro Tempore Juan Flavier, Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan, Richard Gordon, Pia Cayetano, Ramon Magsaysay Jr. and Manuel "Lito" Lapid attended the meeting apparently called to cover Drilon's flanks.

For showing up at the Sona, Drilon also drew approval from Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita.

"He showed the world that he is a decent official ... even if he was on the other side of the fence," Ermita told reporters. "He was man enough and showed his caliber as a leader."

She was looking at me

"I myself clapped, because she was looking at me," said Flavier. "But she couldn't see (Drilon) because he was behind her."

"I also clapped, as is customary. When the President is introduced and when she's through (with her speech), you had to clap," Pangilinan said, adding in jest that he stomped his feet when the President sounded the call for "Cha-cha," or Charter change.

Drilon's "close encounters" with the President on Monday were some of the most closely watched moments during Ms Arroyo's nationally televised address. He left through the back door after the address, avoiding reporters.

Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr. last night manifested on the floor that Drilon should be "commended" for coming to the House on Monday although he knew fully well that he be would heckled.

"He deserves our apology (for his) moral courage in coming here to see his duty through," said Locsin, a member of the majority coalition.

Locsin also commended members of the minority who, instead of walking out during the Sona to embarrass Ms Arroyo, decided to boycott the event.

He said "these marks of civility that were violated by this chamber" should be rectified.

"I hope this manifestation will turn into a resolution later," said Locsin. *With reports from TJ Burgonio and Christine O. Avendaño*

BOXER Manny Pacquiao greets President Arroyo after her State of the Nation Address at the Batasang Pambansa Monday. EDWIN BACASMAS

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, July 27, 2005
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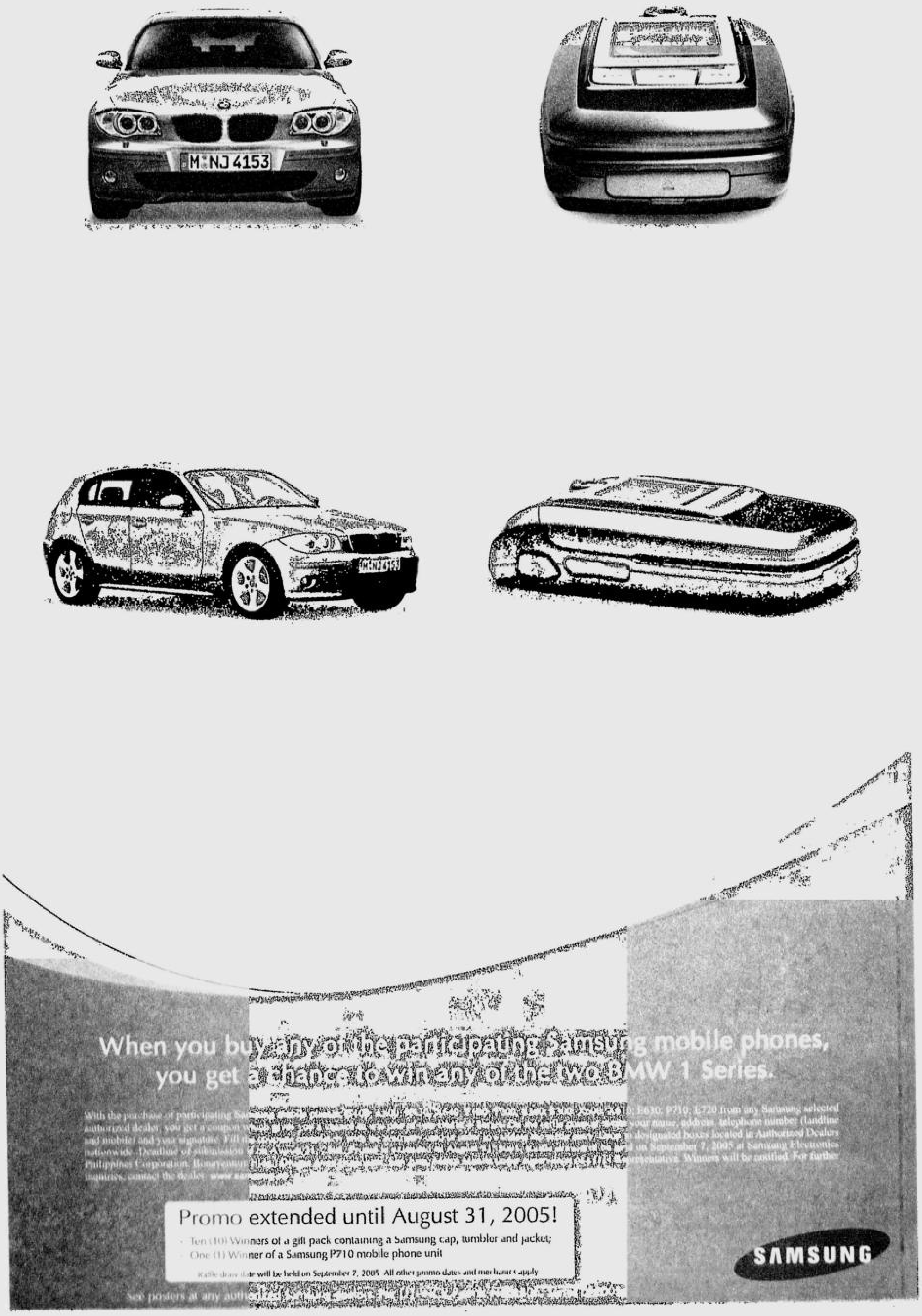
1st Reading: Ex 34:29-35
Gospel: Matthew 13:44-46

Jesus sent the crowds away and went into the house. And his disciples came to him saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field." He answered them, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world; the good seed are the people of the Kingdom; the weeds are those who follow the evil one. The enemy who sows them is the devil; the harvest is the end of time and the workers are the angels.

Just as the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so will it be at the end of time. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom all that is scandalous and all who do evil. And these will be thrown in the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the just will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. If you have ears, then hear."

Commentary

Again the stories of finding, rejoicing, selling all and buying and the one that is a bit different: seeking, finding, rejoicing, selling all and buying. The treasure hidden in the field comes to the one without him looking for it (does it stumble upon it, walking through the field, or is he working in the field; it is sticking out and he happens to see it?) And the other consciously, actively spends time looking for it. There is the found (treasure) and being found (the man is found by the treasure). There is the hidden brought to light and buried again-mysteries! And always there is joy abounding that drives one to sell everything to have the treasure. We have the treasure! What are we doing with it? The word, the kingdom of Good News to the poor, our relationships to Our Father, with Jesus in the Spirit (for starters). Where is our joy? Why aren't we selling everything to lay claim to it, or letting it claim us for God? "Keep this treasure (light) burning in your hearts until you bring it to the judgment of the kingdom."–baptismal ritual.



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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

RP takes over Asean helm from Burma

VIENTIANE—Burma (Myanmar) agreed Tuesday to forgo its chairmanship of Southeast Asia's bloc next year to avoid a damaging Western boycott of the group's meetings, as its foreign ministers prepared an accord on joining forces during tsunamis and other catastrophes.

The chairmanship goes instead to next-in-line Philippines, the country's Foreign Minister Alberto Romulo said.

In a statement, Romulo yesterday said the Philippines is "prepared to assume the chairmanship" after Malaysia's turn ends in 2006.

Romulo said the Philippines will be chairing the Asean at a time when the regional grouping is gathering momentum towards crafting its own Charter and securing a "central role" on the wider stage of East Asia.

The United States and European Union had demanded that military-ruled Burma either move toward democracy and release pro-democracy campaigner Aung San Suu Kyi or forfeit its turn at the rotating chairmanship of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations in late 2006.

Burma's Foreign Minister Nyan Win and fellow Asean ministers decided during a retreat Tuesday in the Laotian capital that the junta would relinquish the post, a joint Asean statement said.

Nyan Win told colleagues that his government wanted to give its "full attention" to its "ongoing national reconciliation and democratization process," the Asean statement said.

"We agreed that once Myanmar is ready to take its turn to be the Asean chair, it can do so," the Asean ministers said in the statement.

The issue came to a head in Laos this week during the group's annual ministerial meeting that runs through Friday, followed by the Asean Regional Forum—a security dialogue with 14 other governments with interests in the region, such as the US, EU, Russia and China.

Asean's more rapidly developing countries had feared damage to their trade ties with the West if the chairmanship issue festered. US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice skipped this week's meeting, sending a deputy instead, in what diplomats suspected could be a precursor to a full boycott.

Asia expert Larry Wortzel of The Heritage Foundation in Washington said that handing the chairmanship to Burma would have been "foolish."

"Certainly Burma as chair would make it difficult for the US to focus its diplomacy on other matters of concern to the Asean states," Wortzel said.

Despite Burma's stated intention to focus on national reconciliation, Nyan Win snubbed the UN envoy who has tried to push those efforts forward since 2002.

Nyan Win refused to meet with UN envoy Razali Ismail during this week's six-day conference in Laos, sending him a message that "he would be too busy," said Razali, who came to Vientiane specifically to meet with the foreign minister. *AP with a report from Volt Contreras*

BURMA Foreign Minister Nyan Win (left) confers with Philippine Foreign Minister Alberto Romulo during the opening of the 38th Asean Ministerial Meeting Tuesday, July 26, in Vientiane, Laos. AP

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Police name suspected London bombers

LONDON—British police on Monday named two men they believe carried out last week's failed bomb attacks on London, as they battled desperately to track down those responsible before more blasts hit the city.

At the same time, Prime Minister Tony Blair said he was "desperately sorry" for a major error in the hunt for the attackers, the death on Friday of a young Brazilian electrician who was shot eight times by antiterror police.

Muktar Said Ibrahim, 27, also known as Muktar Mohammed Said, and Yasin Hassan Omar, 24, were thought to have detonated two of the four failed bombs on Thursday, said Peter Clarke, head of the Metropolitan Police's antiterrorism branch.

Ibrahim was named as the attacker who tried to blow up a Number 26 bus as it drove through east London, while Omar is thought to have endeavored to explode his rucksack-carried device on a London Underground subway train.

Police on Monday also raided a flat in Southgate, a suburb of north London, thought to be connected to Ibrahim.

The men—along with two more would-be suicide bombers who targeted other Underground lines—fled after the main charges in their bombs failed to detonate.

Police said Monday they had arrested two more men in connection with the attempted bombings, bringing the total held to five, though none was believed to be one of the bombers.

Police have gathered a wealth of clues from the unexploded bombs the men left behind, but warn that their biggest-ever manhunt has become a "race against time" to find the bombers before they strike again.

London has been on high security alert since July 7, when four men named later as British Muslims, three of Pakistani origin, killed themselves and 52 other people on three underground trains and a bus in different parts of the capital.

The virtual carbon-copy attack two weeks later injured no one after the explosives failed, but police are acutely aware that with the bombers still at large the city might not be so lucky again.

Despite the death of Jean Charles de Menezes, 27, who was chased through Stockwell Underground station in south London before being shot repeatedly in the head by officers who feared he was a suspected suicide bomber, police have warned a shoot-to-kill policy remains in place.

"We are all desperately sorry for the death of an innocent person, and I understand entirely the feelings of the young man's family," Blair told a joint press conference with his French counterpart Dominique de Villepin on Monday.

"But we also have to understand the police are doing their job in very, very difficult circumstances and I think it is important that we give them every support." It was important also to understand that "had the circumstances been different and for example, this had turned out to be a terrorist and they had failed to take that action, they would have been criticized the other way," Blair noted.

Britain's Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) said the Brazilian was shot eight times in total.

Brazil's Foreign Minister Celso Amorim said the fight against terrorism must respect human rights after holding talks in Britain about the shooting.

At a joint press conference with British counterpart Jack Straw, Amorim said Brazil "understands the plight" faced by Britain following the two sets of bomb attacks. However, he also stressed "combating terrorism has to be done with full respect of human rights." *AFP*

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Nearly 4 years after 9/11, WTC may get 1st tenant

NEW YORK—The first building to go up as part of the reconstruction of New York's World Trade Center is close to getting its first signed tenant, a source familiar with the deal said on Monday.

American Express Financial Advisors, soon to be spun off by parent American Express Co., is near to signing a deal for 20,000 sq. ft. of space, or about half a floor, of 7 World Trade Center, a 1.7 million-square-foot building that is set to open soon, the source said.

Bud Perrone, a representative for WTC developer Larry Silverstein, declined to comment, as did Susan Austin, spokesperson for American Express Financial Advisors.

Seven World Trade Center was built next to the Twin Towers site. On Sept. 11, 2001, the fire that engulfed the towers after they were hit by hijacked planes then spread to 7 WTC and destroyed it, too.

The new tenant probably will be located close to the 38th floor, where Silverstein will have his offices. CB Richard Ellis Group Inc., the broker for the building, will be moving its downtown New York office to the building from One Liberty Plaza, the source said.

The asking rent is about $50 per square foot, but incentives reduce that by about $15 per square foot. The rent for No. 7 will be tied to the incentives, the source said.

At the end of June, the difference between asking rents in Midtown Manhattan and Downtown reached its widest margin ever—nearly $17 per square foot higher in Midtown. The spread was even greater when concessions such as free rent, improvements and incentives were taken into account, according to brokerage company Cushman & Wakefield.

Overall, Downtown rent was about $31.20 per square foot in the second quarter, compared with $47.87 in Midtown, according to Cushman & Wakefield.

The 7 World Trade Center building, which has been completed but has not yet opened, cost $1.36 billion, including $839 million for construction and $516 million to pay off an existing mortgage.

New York Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, one of the state's most powerful politicians, represents the area. He has called for a series of tax breaks and other incentives for lower Manhattan. *Reuters*

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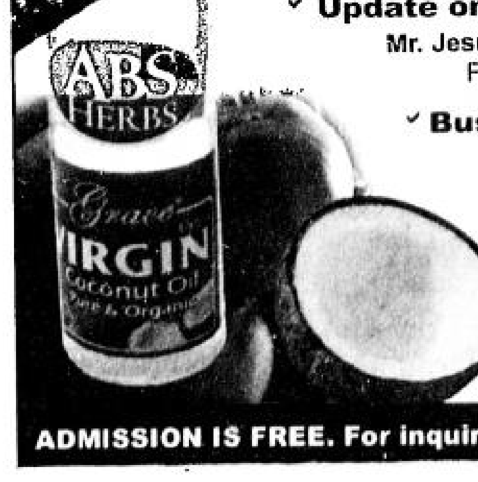

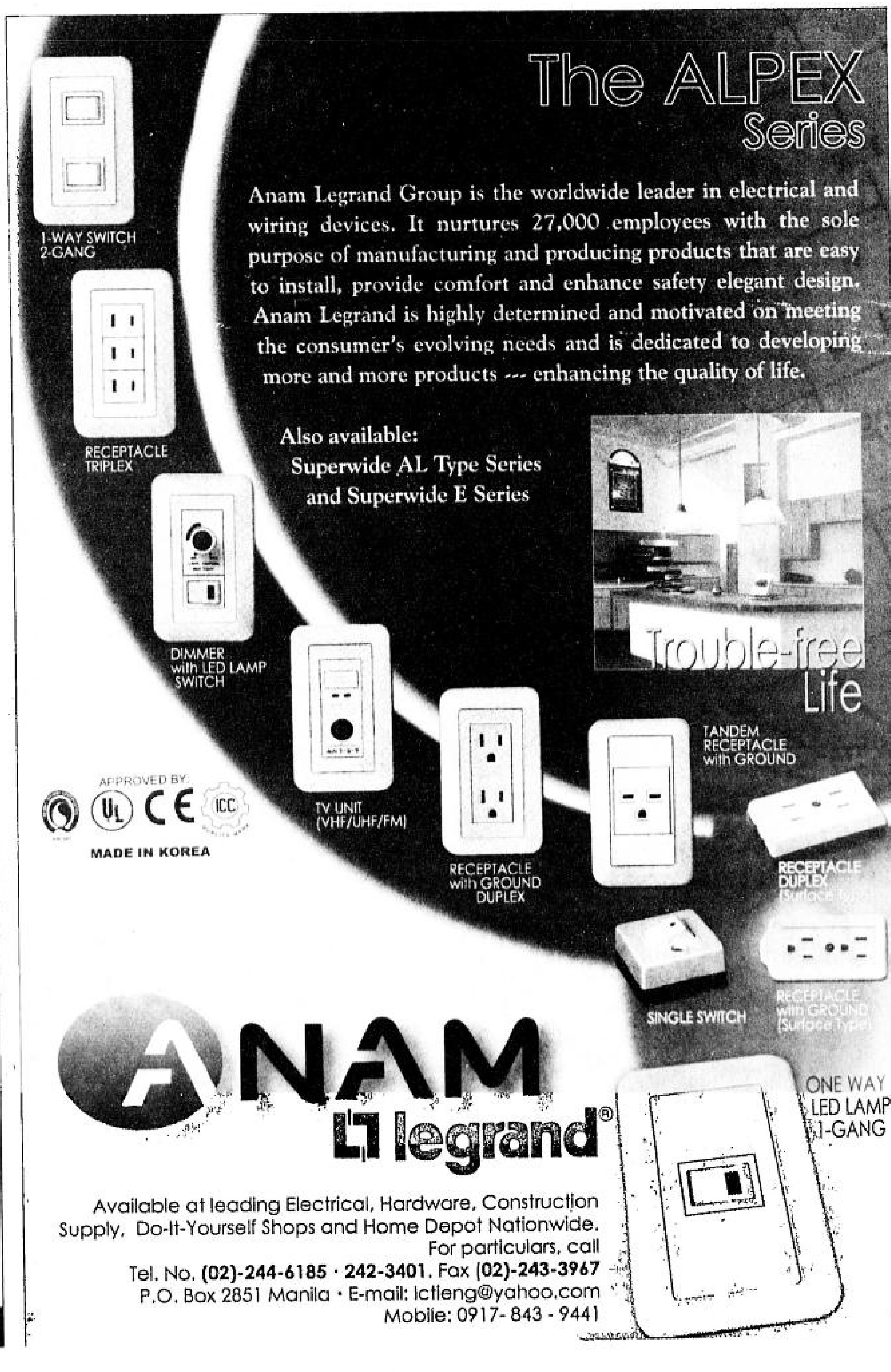
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Musharraf rejects direct Pakistan al-Qaida link to Egypt bombings

ISLAMABAD—President Pervez Musharraf on Monday said al-Qaida had been dismembered in Pakistan and could not have directed the bomb blasts in Egypt and London from his country.

Under pressure after British and Egyptian police have pointed to Pakistani links to deadly bomb attacks in London and the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh, Musharraf said al-Qaida was now a global "phenomenon."

He rejected as "absolutely and totally baseless" suggestions the network founded by Osama bin Laden had its headquarters in Pakistan and said its communications structure had been broken.

"So in this situation, is it possible that an al-Qaida man sitting here is controlling events in London or Sharm el-Sheikh or other parts of the world?" he said, speaking to journalists in the eastern city of Lahore.

"This is absolutely wrong." He added that "the world must understand that this al-Qaida has become a phenomenon" and said it had become "a state of mind" that could not be defeated by military means alone.

Musharraf has been under pressure to step up the fight against extremists after the July 7 London bombings and ordered his security apparatus to round up hundreds of suspected extremists, triggering protests at home.

Adding to the pressure, Egyptian police Monday said they were searching for six Pakistani suspects in connection with Saturday's attacks that killed at least 88 people.

In the manhunt, police exchanged fire with Bedouin gunmen who were believed to be hiding the suspects in the mountainous interior of Egypt's Sinai peninsula.

MUSHARRAF

"Two Pakistanis had been staying there, and it is suspected that the bombs were assembled in this area," an Egyptian intelligence source said.

Pictures of the suspects, who were believed to have entered Egypt in early July, had been distributed to police stations, police said. Their passports had been found in an unspecified Sharm el-Sheikh hotel.

In his comments Monday Musharraf, wearing his general's uniform, said that Pakistan in past operations had dismantled al-Qaida's command and control system and captured more than 700 members.

"Wherever we find them, we attack them—their vertical and horizontal linkages have been broken and there is no homogeneity in them," he said.

"It has no command structure originating from Pakistan and conveying messages to the whole world to do this act and do that act under total co-ordination of some commander." He added: "It is a phenomenon where everyone has started calling himself al-Qaida, whether he has done it in London or Sharm el-Sheikh." "Now we have to deal with this phenomenon, and a phenomenon is a state of mind. It is in the mind of people. So, to deal with the phenomenon, you have to change states of mind.

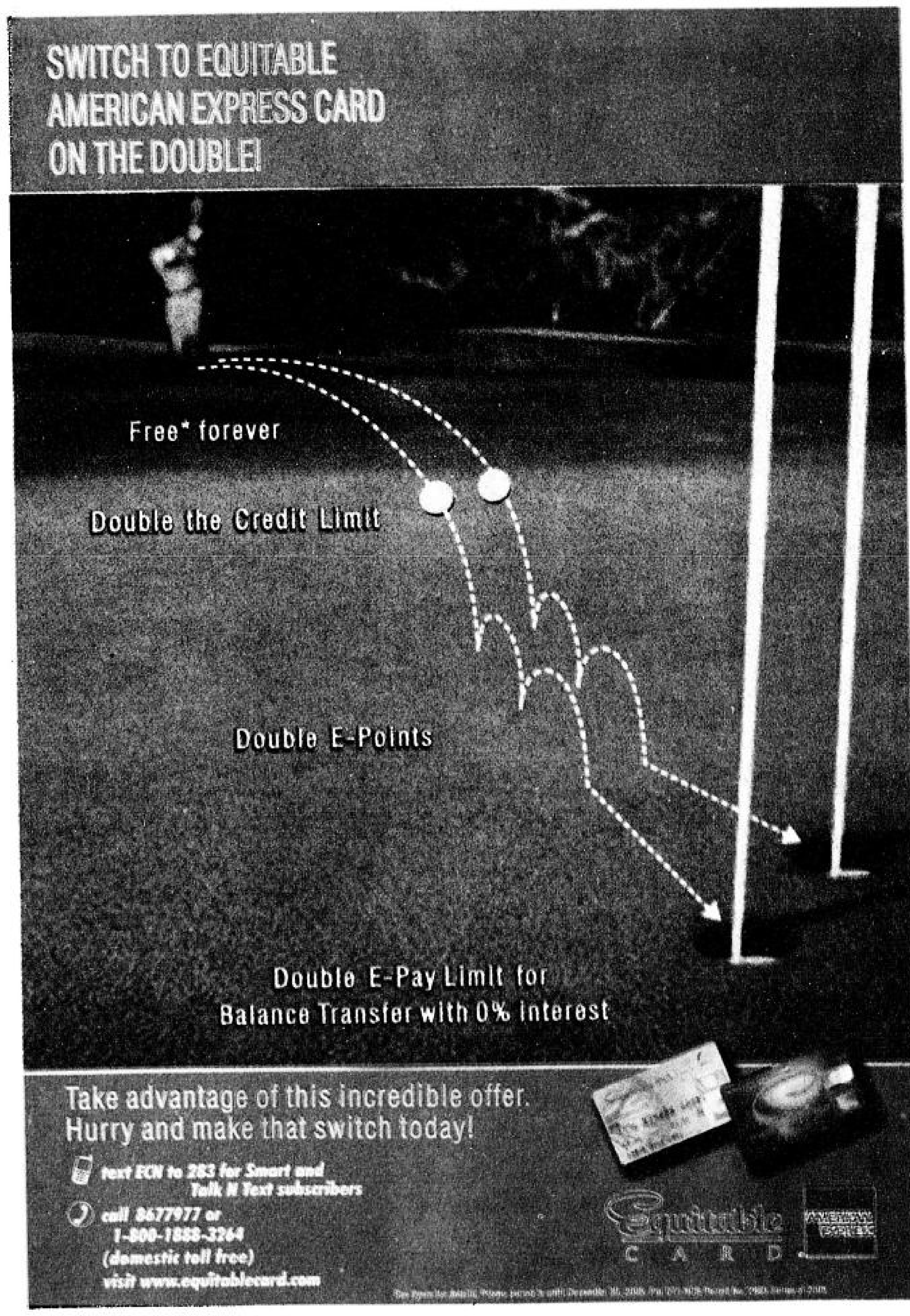
He added that "the whole world has to act to resolve political disputes and social issues. The sooner it is understood, the better for the entire world." Musharraf, who has been targeted for assassination for his pro-Western stance, has come under increasing pressure from Britain and the United States to crack down hard on Islamic militants since the London bombings.

Three of the four July 7 London bombers who killed 52 people were British citizens of Pakistani descent, and several of them had visited the country of their parents months before the attacks.

Musharraf has launched nationwide raids against mosques and Islamic schools in a bid to uproot clerics preaching anti-Western hatred.

Police have also enforced bans on mosque loudspeakers being used for clerics' speeches and on printed material and audio recordings of mullahs calling for holy war against the West. *AFP*

MONGOLIAN FASHION
A Chinese Mongolian model shows off the latest in traditional fashion, designed by a Mongolian designer, during the Naadam festival July 25.



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WORLDBRIEFS

N. Korea crisis talks resume

BEIJING—Six-party talks aimed at ending the crisis over North Korea's nuclear ambitions resumed on Tuesday after a year's hiatus with host China appealing for flexibility and US reassurances of Pyongyang's sovereignty. While few expect a breakthrough, the atmosphere in the run-up to the fourth round of talks between the two Koreas, the United States, Russia, Japan and China has been upbeat. The US held a rare one-on-one meeting with North Korea lasting over an hour on Monday, raising hopes of a less confrontational approach to discussions which have dragged on for nearly three years. Three previous rounds ended without progress. *Reuters*

Saddam henchmen interrogated

BAGHDAD—The Iraqi Special Tribunal responsible for investigating war crimes allegations against Saddam Hussein's regime released video footage Monday showing the interrogation of six of his top henchmen. They included two half-brothers of the ousted president—Watban and Barzan Ibrahim al-Hassan—and a cousin—Ali Hassan al-Majid, better known as "Chemical Ali" for his alleged role in the gassing of thousands of Kurdish civilians in 1988. They also included former Vice President Taha Yassin Ramadan, the head of Saddam's office, Ahmad Hussein Khudhair al-Samarrai, and the former leader of the ruling Baath party in Diyala province northeast of Baghdad, Sameer Abd al-Aziz al-Najeem. *AFP*

Nasa may waive shuttle safety rule

CAPE CANAVERAL—Nasa is prepared to waive a flight safety rule so it can launch space shuttle Discovery on the first mission since the 2003 Columbia accident if a fuel sensor glitch reoccurs, managers at the US space agency said on Monday. The malfunction involving one of four hydrogen fuel sensors forced Nasa to postpone Discovery's first launch attempt on July 13. For its second liftoff attempt on Tuesday, Nasa is considering changing a rule that all four sensors must be working. Officials said Nasa was willing to waive the rule requiring all four sensors to be working because it feels there are sufficient safeguards and they are confident the shuttle's safety would not be endangered even if one sensor malfunctioned. *Reuters*

China identifies mysterious illness

BEIJING—China's ministry of health confirmed Tuesday that a mysterious illness that has killed at least 19 people was a bacteria spread among pigs, as all pork exports from the area were suspended. The disease has proved so deadly that more than a quarter of the 67 confirmed cases in the southwestern province of Sichuan have died. "Experts have initially diagnosed that the disease is caused by streptococcus suis bacteria infection," said a statement on the ministry's website. *AFP*

CIA operatives ordered arrested

MILAN—An Italian appeals court on Monday ordered the arrest of six CIA operatives accused of involvement in the 2003 kidnapping of a radical Muslim cleric from a street in Milan. A court last month issued arrest warrants for the other 13 US intelligence operatives Italy says took part in a clandestine operation to kidnap Egyptian national Abu Omar, handing him over to Egyptian authorities for questioning. The prosecutor told the court last week that the probe into the kidnapping had turned up "serious evidence of responsibility" of the six, named as Eliana Castaldo, Victor Castellano, John Thomas Gurley, James Robert Kirkland, Anne Lidia Jenkins and Brenda Liliana Ibanez. *AFP*

China eyes
in space b

BEIJING—Chinese women astronau
soon be reaching for the stars alon
their male counterparts, an officia
China's space program said M
night.

They will embark on a space miss
later than 2010, working as flight co
ders or on-board engineers, Hu Sh
deputy chief commander of China's M
Space Program, told China Daily.

The selection process, to formally s
2006, will choose at least four women
nauts, but will not necessarily favor
sional pilots, Hu said while attendin
ception for three American astronaut
arrived in Beijing last week.

This year China's air force has se
around 30 women pilots, some of wh
reportedly intended to be future astro

"It is true women aviators have so
vantages in terms of flight experien
physique, but we need payload exper
strong science and engineering back
to do experiments in outer space," he a

That means China will focus on w
with science and education backg
when looking for candidates, Hu said.

The scenario contrasts with the se
of China's first group of male astrona

Ancient phallu

A SCULPTED and polished phallus fou
German cave is among the earliest repr
tions of male sexuality ever uncover
searchers say.

The 20 cm-long, 3 cm-wide stone
which is dated to be about 28,000 yea
was buried in the famous Hohle Fels Ca
Ulm in the Swabian Jura.

The prehistoric "tool" was reassemble
14 fragments of siltstone. Its life size sug
may well have been used as a sex aid b
Age makers, scientists report.

"In addition to being a symbolic repr
tion of male genitalia, it was also at tim
for knapping flints," explained P
Nicholas Conard, from the department
Prehistory and Quaternary Ecology, at TA
University.

"There are some areas where it has so
typical scars from that," he told the BB
website.

Researchers believe the object's dis
form and etched rings around one en

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Third group owns up Egypt blasts

AFP

DUBAI—A third previously unknown Islamist group has claimed responsibility on the Internet for the bomb attacks on Egypt's Sharm el-Sheikh resort in which at least 64 people were killed.

The claim by the Tawhid and Jihad Group in Egypt could be more credible as it was posted on an Islamist website often used by the al-Qaida Organization in Iraq, but it was not possible to verify the authenticity of the undated statement.

Two other Islamist groups, one claiming links to al-Qaida, have already said in Internet statements that they were behind the Sharm el-Sheikh bombings on Saturday.

The Tawhid and Jihad Group in Egypt also said it was responsible for bomb attacks that ripped through the resort town of Taba last October, killing 34 people.

It said it carried out both attacks "in obedience to the leaders of jihad (holy war) in al-Qaida, Sheikh Osama bin Laden and Sheikh Ayman al-Zawahri" and to avenge the "oppressed brothers in Iraq and Afghanistan."

The group's name is similar to the former name of the al-Qaida Organization in Iraq led by Jordanian Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

The statement named five of those involved in the Taba attacks as Iyad the Palestinian, Suleiman Fulayfel, Hamad al-Tirbani, Mohammed Badawi and Salamah al-Tihi. *Reuters*

first woman year 2010

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cluding Yang Liwei, who conducted China's maiden manned space flight nearly two years ago. Yang and his 13 colleagues, all former fighter pilots, are preparing for the country's second manned space flight, scheduled for this autumn.

"The life support and environment control systems of our launch vehicles and spacecraft will allow average people, who are physically adequate and with some training, to fulfill space missions," Hu said.

In the near future, the norm will be for Chinese astronauts, men and women, to work together as partners in journeys to outer space, he said.

He did not specify what kind of missions they would conduct together.

Astronaut Yang said "it is the norm" for countries to include women in their space programme. He did not elaborate.

Zhang Qingwei, president of the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corp., said that with the development of China's manned space program, the country will increase scientific research in orbit. Women specializing in medicine, new materials, biology and other disciplines will all have the chance to become astronauts. *China Daily/Asia News Network*

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there can be little doubt as to its symbolic nature.

"It's highly polished; it's clearly recognizable," said Professor Conard.

The TÃbingen team working Hohle Fels already had 13 fractured parts of the phallus in storage, but it was only with the discovery of a 14th fragment last year that they were able finally to work out the "jigsaw."

The different stone sections were all recovered from a well-dated ash layer in the cave complex associated with the activities of modern humans (not their pre-historic "cousins," the Neanderthals).

The dig site is one of the most remarkable in central Europe. Hohle Fels stands more than 500m above sea level in the Ach River Valley and has produced thousands of Upper Palaeolithic artifacts.

Some have been truly exquisite in their sophistication and detail, such as a 30,000-year-old avian figurine crafted from mammoth ivory. *BBC News Service*

HOW TO RULE THE WORLD

Congratulations. The mere fact you chose to read this says a lot about you. Although you've already accomplished some impressive feats throughout your life, your drive to reach greater heights hasn't waned a bit. And this is what separates you from the rest. Read on to find out the real secret of those born to dominate the world.

What makes a ruler?

Whatever world you are seeking to dominate, you have to have the mental and physical strength to rule. You have to be at your optimum performance all the time. All of history's greatest men displayed awesome toughness in both mind and body in the harshest of conditions.

In ancient times there was King Leonidas whose 300 Spartan soldiers made life hell for an army of 10,000 Persians at Thermopylae. There was simply no room for weakness in that battle. If they just scurried in the face of overwhelming odds, history would be very different. (Imagine having a Persian king ruling New York City instead of Mayor Bloomberg.)

Just recently it's a surprise to learn the late Pope John Paul II was an avid hiker, rower and football player. It's no wonder he was able to travel across the globe, endure jet lag, get shot and survive and make peace with his assassin. (Not to mention lead the fight against evil. Makes him a real-life superhero, don't you think?)

What makes one perform at his optimum?

Exercise? Healthy diet and lifestyle? Of course. But there's an often overlooked side to all of the 21st century's health fads and diets. It is the very air you breathe.

It's oxygen.

Consider that 90% of your energy comes from oxygen and only 10% from the food we eat. It is the spark of life. You can survive a couple of weeks without food, a couple of days without water but only minutes without oxygen.

More than any part of the body, our brain uses the most oxygen. It is the seat of power, that's why it needs it the most. A few minutes without oxygen, our brain cells begin to die out.

Among the planets in the solar system, ours is the only one teeming with life because our air is oxygen-rich. It is not even an impossibility that our planet is the only one with life in the entire universe. All because of oxygen.

But does more oxygen in my body really make a difference?

To answer this more clearly, consider cars. Have you ever seen a race car tank up in your neighborhood gasoline station? Aside from the obvious fact that race cars aren't street legal so you'll never see them driving around your village, they also use special fuel. Race cars use high octane fuel, making engines perform with greater power.

The same is true in your mind and body. Your blood and your bloodstreams are your body's fuel lines while oxygen is the fuel. The greater the amount of oxygen in your blood, the more optimum is your performance. Muscles won't tire out easily. Your heart, kidneys and liver perform more efficiently. With more oxygen getting into the brain, you increase your alertness and your overall mental faculties improve.

So how do I increase oxygen in my blood?

Obviously, improving your aerobic efficiency should do the trick. The more you get used to exercise, the more efficient your body becomes at absorbing and delivering oxygen to your muscles and to your brain. But there is a limit to this. You can only exercise so much and let's face the facts. These days, unless you're a professional athlete, it's impossible to dedicate a large portion of your time to doing sports or exercise.

Enter the "Wonder of the Universe."

In East Asia, a plant root has been held in such high regard for its stimulating effect. The Japanese call it the "wonder of the universe", while the Koreans regard it as the "root of life." It's ginseng. From the Chinese term "Jen Shen" which means "the power of earth in human form."

Such mythical metaphors on ginseng is not without basis. For what East Asians have always known for the last 2000 years of using it is now being proven by modern science.

In study after study, ginseng has been found to significantly increase oxygen uptake in the brain and body. Forgo (1985) proved that ginseng resulted in a 26% increase in oxygen transport capacity of the heart. Shaepdael (1993) likewise showed that shifting from ginseng to placebo decreases oxygenation, while shifting from placebo to ginseng increases oxygenation.

But not all ginseng are created equal.

Yes, there is a scientific basis to the mythical powers of ginseng. But let this not compel you to start planting ginseng in your garden and hope to become Superman in time.

Firstly, ginseng only grows in the temperate climates of Japan, Korea and China. And secondly, not all ginseng are the same. In the studies mentioned above, only Panax ginseng was clinically-proven to improve performance and deliver results.

So what's the big deal about Panax ginseng?

It takes ten years to grow it. Yes, that's not a misprint. It really takes ten long years to grow Panax ginseng. Preparing the land alone takes three years while you have to find something worthwhile to do while waiting for the ginseng to grow for seven long years. (It's far easier to raise your own children than to raise Panax ginseng.)

Who in his right mind would grow Panax ginseng?

Fortunately, only the experts from Pharmaton Health Care Products in Switzerland have such a passionate regard in the power of Panax ginseng that they've decided not just to grow it, but process it into capsules. And these capsules are what we now know as Pharmaton. Or in its generic term, Multivitamins, Minerals, Deanol and Ginseng extract G115. Notice Ginseng G115.

Pharmaton has ensured that only the highest quality Panax ginseng goes into each capsule by standardizing the level of active ingredients. In layman's talk, it simply means each and every capsule of Pharmaton has the same quantity, quality and potency. Just to make a point, in 1990, Pharmaton rejected 80% of the Panax ginseng crop it obtained due to pesticide and toxic residue. (That's ten long years of labor down the drain.)

Does Pharmaton have the same mythical power of Panax ginseng?

There's no other way to prove the power of Pharmaton than with clinical studies. So over 30 clinical studies have been conducted on the benefits of taking Pharmaton. And mind you, not all multivitamin brands go through rigid testing because it's simply too time-consuming and expensive, costing millions of dollars. But such is the potency of Pharmaton, it just has to be proven, even at such great cost.

Here are just some of the clinical tests. Forgo & Kirchdorfer (1981) showed that maximum oxygen capacity increased significantly from 77% to 90% after treatment with Ginseng G115. Again, Forgo (1983) proved sportsmen treated with Pharmaton increased oxygen uptake by 21% as compared to those treated with placebo. Ardenne et al (1987) also proved that Ginseng G115 use resulted in long-term increase of oxygen transport into organs and tissues of the body from 100% to 129%.

Only Pharmaton has Standardized Panax Ginseng G115, clinically-proven to increase oxygen uptake in your brain and body. Its production undergoes rigid Swiss-quality standards, assuring you of its consistent potency and purity.

Definitely, it's the only multivitamin for people who would like to rule the world.

Pharmaton. Experience the power of oxygenation. Take control of your mind and body.

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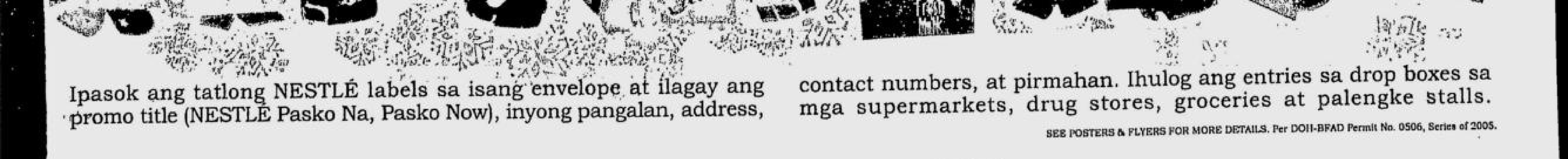

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Blind

EDITORIAL

WHAT is expedient politically is not necessarily what statesmanship requires. Last Monday, President Macapagal-Arroyo ignored what the country wanted to hear discussed, in order to pander to the leaders of a party, Lakas-CMD, which has always mistrusted her and of which she has never been too fond. The Lakas people got to hear what they wanted to hear. The Filipino people, on the other hand, aside from hearing a perfunctory appeal from the President to help her, heard nothing about the issues dividing our society.

The President said there was a Philippines poised for economic takeoff, and a Philippines "whose political system, after equally long years of degeneration, has become a hindrance to progress." Later in her speech, she theorized that, "Perhaps we politicians have done our best, but maybe our best is not enough, given the present system. Perhaps we have strained the present political system to its final limit."

This attempt at collective soul-searching, while having some truth to it, ignores the fundamental question of how, and to what extent, the President has been responsible for the strain.

The strain, today, is caused by a presidency with a legitimacy problem, and which refuses to address the problem. Instead, the President suggests, "It is time to turn to the people, bring them into government—and change the way that government is done."

That sentence bears out everything that is wrong with the President's speech, and with her attitude to the crisis. The people have turned: they have turned to the government, they have turned to the institutions they believe in and out of government, they are trying to change the way government is done. But what have the people gotten for their efforts? The country heard a President who is deaf to her people's demands, dumb to their clamor for an accounting, and blind to the harsh reality confronting her government.

What the President attempted to do was seek a way out, both for her and the party she now needs to rally to her defense. That wasn't statesmanship or vision, it was a plea bargain like you see in the movies: in exchange for what the authorities want, the guilty party settles for a shortened sentence. Lakas-CMD wants Charter change, to be managed by it and defined by it. The President wants to bow out of office not in an act of surrender, but through some sort of face-saving vindication. Lakas has offered it. She has accepted it. The public is not involved in the plea bargain.

The thing is, while a significant portion of the public is morally convinced of her guilt, the President still has to be judged by the system. We do not know if she is acting out of desperation or cunning calculation, but she seems to be gambling on the machinery of Lakas to save her from being impeached.

From day one, the President has been faulted for her one-step-forward-two-steps-backward approach to governance and politics. We have seen this tendency taken to extremes in recent weeks, from a pointless apology to a vehement defiance, and now, indifference to public opinion. It is this tendency that is putting stresses on our system. It is the cause not only of the President's but our institutional woes. It is the reason why, time and again, she has been accused of preferring the sneaky, cynical way out rather than the more difficult, but ultimately more democratic, road to progress. That is why we have two countries: a Philippines with a President in political disrepute, which prevents her from being the President of a Philippines poised for takeoff. Because, there is only one Philippines.

Veto power at UN

FOREIGN COMMENT

ONE of the most controversial aspects of the UN Security Council is that any of its five permanent members—the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia and China—can veto any decision of the General Assembly.

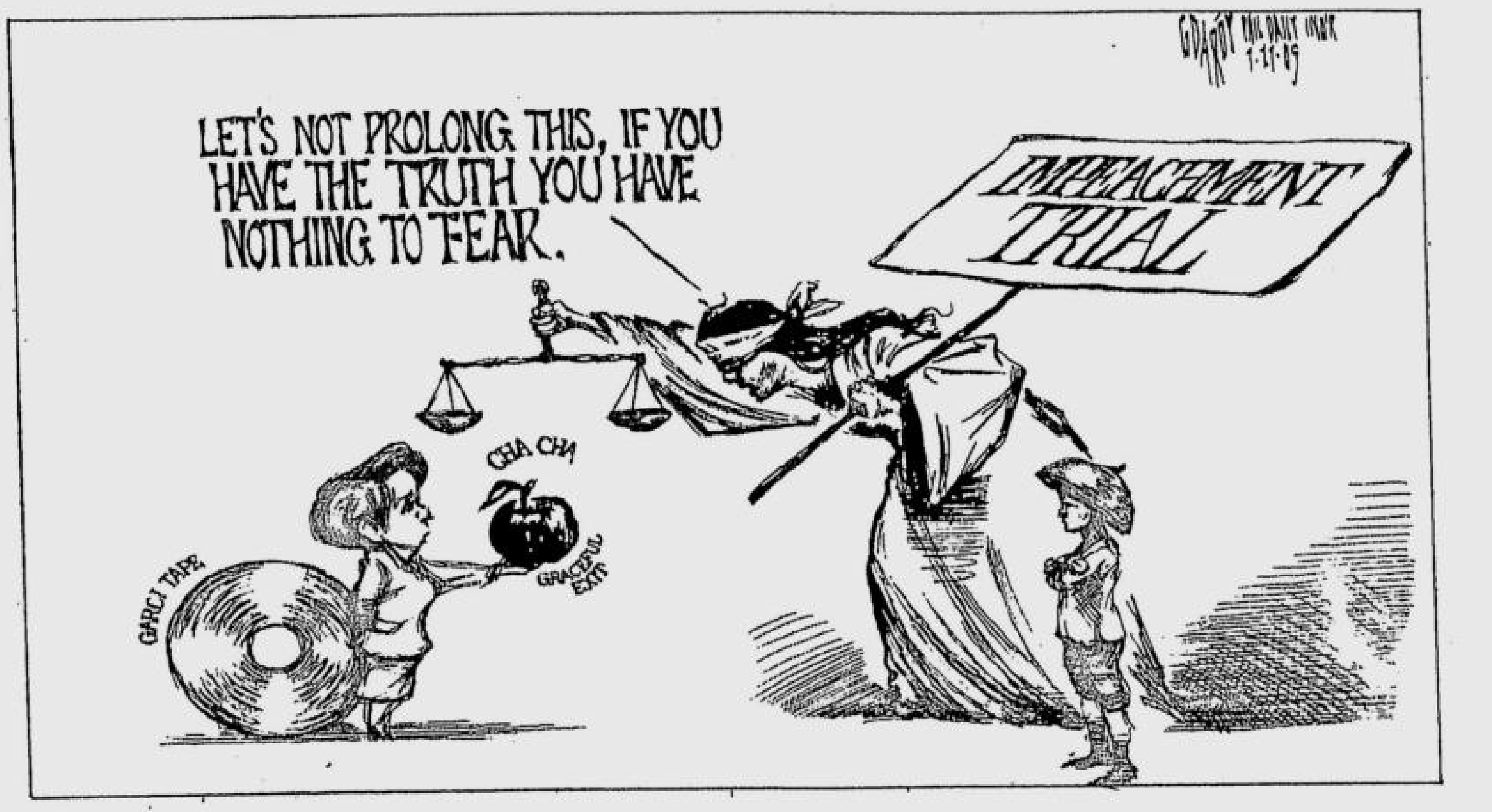
The post-World War II logic of that structure and the veto has long expired. The permanent five constitute a tiny percentage of the world population, and in a few years, they will be a small part of the global economy. However, while some of them are willing to consider expanding the membership of the Council, none of them is in favor of handing any possible new members the veto right.

The problem of the veto is just that, it gives too much power to a few people.

Expanding the Security Council without sharing out veto powers with the new entrants is ridiculous and meaningless.

If the UN doesn't move quickly to deal with these Byzantine iniquities, the world will move on and leave it behind. It always does.

Daily Nation (Nairobi, Kenya)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LET'S NOT PROLONG THIS, IF YOU HAVE THE TRUTH YOU HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR.
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A model of deception, appeasement and evasion

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo may have failed in governance, but her speech before Congress last Monday showed that she has other talents. Her State of the Nation Address was a model of deception, appeasement and evasion. The speech was short (only 4.5 pages long), too short for her to tell many lies, but she still managed to tell enough of them.

Her first claim of achievement—that she created four million jobs in four years, as though that solves the unemployment problem—was an outright deception. She did not say that there are 13.5 million unemployed in the country and that their number is increasing by 500,000 a year. Make that claim of four million jobs to the hordes of workers looking for jobs and not finding any.

She said she built 30,000 new classrooms all over the country. How come the media keep showing students in dilapidated classrooms, 70 or more to a room, or holding classes without classrooms?

She said she is solving the fiscal crisis. How? Her solution is to squeeze more and more taxes from the people who already cannot make both ends meet. She did not say that she would reduce government spending and abolish the pork barrel. I presume the fiscal crisis includes the foreign debt, but she did not say how we are going to pay the gargantuan debt or why she borrowed more than the four previous presidents put together.

She said the Muslim rebellion in Mindanao is nearing a solution. But she did not mention that the talks to end the other rebellion—that of the CPP-NPA—has stalled because the rebels do not trust her enough to talk to her and would rather wait for her successor.

She said she has ended the rash of kidnappings. But that is probably because there are no more rich people to kidnap.

If I am not mistaken, she must also have claimed building tens of thousands of homes for the homeless. If that is so, why are squatters increasing everywhere?

Malacañang drum-beaters will make much of the fact that GMA received 33 ovations from the audience. But that was because the Batasan was packed with "*palakpak boys.*" The "*hakot*" crowd was a cheering squad. The session hall was full of local government officials who have been trooping to Malacañang to get their Christmas gifts in July. How can the government pay its debt when Malacañang is already spending the taxes it has yet to collect?

GMA went to Congress not to give the true state of the nation but to appease the local officials and congressmen by saying what they wanted to hear. She said she favors a constituent assembly to change the Constitution and shift to a parliamentary-federalist government. Only a few months ago, she said she favored a constitutional convention, not a con-ass (what an ugly name that says where we should shove it), but now, true to form, she has again changed her mind.

And this is the most dangerous part. It shows that she is no longer running the government, that she is hostage to an ambitious old man. For that was not GMA talking but FVR. The announcement was met with howls of approval and a standing ovation from the congressmen and local officials, for that has been their fondest wish all these years. The happiest was Speaker Jose de Venecia whose own fondest wish is to be chief executive but who knows he can never be elected president. So what is left to him is to run for member of Parliament and then have himself elected prime minister.

Fortunately, we have the senators who would not agree to be part of the con-ass and change the Constitution. Why should they when it would abolish the Senate and their jobs?

GMA and the congressmen behave as if a parliamentary government is the answer to all our problems. It is not. On the contrary, it would make our problems worse and spawn new ones. Graft and corruption would increase. Instead of buying the votes of ordinary voters, the PM wannabe would buy the votes of his fellow MPs, at millions of pesos per vote. Where would he get the money? Where else but from our taxes.

Because the MPs would also be the members of the Cabinet and dictate who should be appointed to the Supreme Court, you can readily see the danger. There would be no balance of power. The majority party has all the powers. The government would be run by only one gang. It would be like Ali Baba and 40,000 thieves running the government. That is why we should all fight Charter change.

Our problems were not caused by the present Constitution. It was caused by an inept President. We should change the President, not the Constitution.

Congressmen argue that lawmaking would be faster in a parliamentary system, unlike now when a bill has to pass through the two Houses of Congress. But there lies the danger. Railroading of bills would be easier.

Besides, we do not need more laws. We already have a surfeit of them and many are not being enforced anyway.

GMA evaded mentioning the burning issues of the day: the Garci tapes, the impeachment case, the *jueteng* payola, graft and corruption. Yet these were what the people wanted to hear. She did not say how she would nurse the economy back to health, just a passing mention that it was "about to take off." Take off where? She did not say. More likely to hell.

As expected, she again asked the people to unite and help her for a better future. But the people are already united in asking her to step down. And what future? She has no future. And while she is the President, the nation has no future, either. So why doesn't she help herself and spare herself all the aggravation by resigning?

Problem-solving

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I SWEAR TV truly ought to issue a warning that says, "Watching GMA is dangerous to your health." Before she goes, she will have added to her many feats single-handedly overcrowding clinics and hospitals with patients suffering from hypertension and heart problems. The people who called me and sent me text messages last Monday were fit to be tied.

I myself caught only a few minutes of her State of the Nation Address on TV (I just wanted to get an idea of the atmosphere), as I had better things to do. The funniest reaction to it I heard on GMA 7's news later that night. A tricycle driver volunteered that he had really wanted to watch the Sona but dozed off almost as soon as GMA spoke. He did think GMA had done some good things for the country. When asked to name one, he frowned seriously in fierce concentration. After half a minute of silence, he began scratching his head a la Bata Reyes. The reporter commented while suppressing her mirth that he seemed lost in thought.

My own reaction was déjà vu. I thought I saw Marcos all over again. Once again we had a President who could no longer set foot outside Malacañang without having to be flown by helicopter and protected heavily—from the people. Once again we had a 4'11" regaling the world with tall tales. Once again we had a President giving the country a very good idea not of the state of the nation but of the state of Congress, one populated by chimpanzees.

The only difference was that this Sona was not without comic relief. That was supplied by the two personas behind GMA, one wearing the face of comedy and the other of tragedy, not unlike the masks you see on the vaudeville stage behind the performers. The masks, of course, belonged to Franklin Drilon and Jose de Venecia, the one looking dourly at the proceedings and the other bursting with glee. I almost expected GMA to break out into song, a la "Tawag ng Tanghalan."

What she did break out into was a spiel (I read it in the newspapers next day) that was not as well without comic relief, though that clearly was not her intention. What made it funny was that all the pressing problems she mentioned, to which she proposed various solutions, could easily be solved by one thing:

That was if she resigned or was ousted, whichever came first.

GMA said the problem was that power was too centralized in Manila. The people need a government that "begins at their doorstep in the barangay, and does not end before the closed door of a bureaucrat in Metro Manila."

She resigns or is ousted and that problem will at least abate, if not disappear. Not since Marcos has anyone more centralized or concentrated power unto herself. While at this, if I recall right, before they mutinied, Antonio Trillanes and company did try to bring the complaint of the soldiers in Mindanao—that their superiors were literally stripping them of their boots—to Metro Manila, and it ended before the closed door of a bureaucrat in Malacañang named Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Well, the door was not entirely closed, it was ajar, and the officers were let in—to a scolding. That was well before eight out of 10 Filipinos said they wanted GMA out. Guess if that will persuade GMA to democratize power.

GMA said we needed to give local and foreign investors a strong message: "We will not waver in our commitment to economic reform and fiscal discipline, whatever the political cost."

She resigns or is ousted and the German investors of Piatco and their government will hear that message. Fiscal discipline will improve dramatically from the sudden disappearance of pillage, along with Mike Arroyo. Best of all, the political cost will be cheap for the nation, if not for GMA.

She said "our political system has now become a hindrance to national progress. (It has) degenerated to an extent that it has become difficult for anyone to make any headway yet keep his hands clean."

GMA resigns or is ousted we will have lost our biggest hindrance to national progress. What hinders progress is a political system that has become the refuge of scoundrels, also called *trapos*. You won't find bigger *trapos* on earth than De Venecia, Fidel Ramos and GMA herself who has gone boldly where the first two have not gone before. And of course all those chimpanzees jumping up and down last Monday. They resign or are ousted too and we will have instant progress—not least in improving the looks of Congress.

As to keeping hands clean, that has nothing to do with political systems. Some people just like to wallow in mud.

GMA said the country needs peace. She resigns or is ousted and this country will not just have peace, it will have peace of mind. GMA said this country needs education. She resigns or is ousted and this country will not just have education, it will have enlightenment. GMA said government needs a new Constitution. She resigns, or is ousted, and this government will not just have a new constitution—it will be constituted by those who were actually elected—it will stop its decline into prostitution.

GMA said we should stop being divided. "Now is not the time for divisiveness.… Let us never lose sight of that greater battle for one people."

She resigns or is ousted and this country will cease to be divided. In fact, she does not resign and this country will be united—against her. She herself said so in December 2002: "If I run, it will require a major political effort on my part. But since I'm among the principal figures in the divisive national events for the last two or three years, my political efforts can only result in never-ending divisiveness." What applies to running applies to overstaying.

GMA said we should overcome our "tendency to be our worst enemy."

She resigns or is ousted and we will have overcome our worst enemy.

Fast track for Charter change

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE LONGEST applause President Macapagal-Arroyo received in her State of the Nation Address last Monday erupted when she said the political system "clearly needs fundamental change, and the sooner the better. It's time to start the great debate on Charter change."

Her 23-minute speech was one of the shortest in the history of the Sona. It was interrupted 30 times by applause and, at times with standing ovation, from the galleries of Congress fully packed with friendly guests, many of them delegations from local government units.

The warm and even enthusiastic reception given to the speech was unexpected and the President herself and her allies in Congress were surprised since they expected a lukewarm, if not hostile, audience.

The President delivered the speech after a morning session of the House of Representatives in which fireworks started with the filing by a group of congressmen of an amended impeachment complaint accusing her of culpable violation of the Constitution, betrayal of the public trust and graft and corrupt practices. Within this rubric, the complaint catalogued specific impeachable offenses that virtually threw the whole Penal Code at her. No president of the country has been accused of so many crimes as the incumbent.

Despite this incendiary start of Congress after more than a month of recess, the antagonistic atmosphere dissipated during the delivery of her speech. Opposition members of Congress rose to the occasion with unaccustomed civility, except for the boycott of a group of legislators.

Constitutional change proved to be the dominant theme of her speech, sidetracking economic issues. The speech skirted the impeachment issue stemming mainly from allegations that the President rigged the 2004 election. The speech hardly touched on the economic and fiscal measures aimed at overcoming the debilitating fiscal deficit. And yet, it linked the poor economic performance to the gridlock-prone, American-style presidential system.

"After long years of cumulative national endeavor," the President said, the economy "is now poised for a takeoff," but the "political system, after equally long years of degeneration, has become a hindrance to progress."

She continued: "Over the years, our political system has degenerated to the extent that it is difficult for anyone to make any headway yet keep his hands clean.... Perhaps we have strained the present political system to its final limit. It is time to turn to the people, bring them into government—and change the way that government is done. The people want a government that works for them at every level. They want good government that begins at their doorstep in the barangay, and does not end before the closed door of a bureaucrat in Metro Manila."

In her strongest pitch yet to shift to a European-style parliamentary system, the President said the form of government would be the decision of the body constituted to undertake Charter change. "But we should consider that legislation could be quickened and laws made more responsible to the people under a parliamentary system, similar to that of our progressive neighbors in the region."

While she said the mode of Charter change "is the exclusive prerogative of Congress," she added that a constituent assembly "may well give our people the quickest reforms."

In opting for the constituent assembly, the President backed the option favored by the House, putting her at odds with the Senate, most of whose members favor a constitutional convention to frame the new constitution.

It is significant that her proposals on constitutional change received the most applause. These proposals tapped into a vein of opinion in rural Philippines clamoring for the devolution of the powers of the central government under a federal structure as the framework of the parliamentary system. She said the economic progress and social stability of the provinces make a "compelling case for federalism."

The President also received a long applause when she said that "perhaps it's time to take the power from the center to the countryside." Her call for a shift to a parliamentary system and federalism appears to have plumbed the pulse of segments of the nation frustrated over the gridlocks of the presidential system as well as the lopsided distribution of powers and resources between Metro Manila and the provinces, where she received broader support than in the urban centers during the last election.

The reference to a constituent assembly as an expeditious approach to constitutional change reflects the urgency she has given to constitutional reforms and represents her wish to fast-track them. This urgency appears to have been dictated by the political crisis that has engulfed her government. Indeed, two of the administration's allies, former President Fidel Ramos and Speaker Jose de Venecia, have proposed the launching of reforms within a time-frame that aims at a transition by mid-2006, as a means to resolve the crisis that has generated demands for her resignation.

The President has been silent about any timetable for the reforms and about whether she would agree to shorten her term by 2006. The coincidence of the crisis with these fast-track proposals has given rise to speculations that they are intended to give her a graceful exit and provide a soft landing from the crisis. This reasoning has been highlighted by the fact that an impeachment case has been laid against the President and that the presidential endorsement of Cha-cha appears like a trade-off for congressional support to stop the impeachment complaint from being sent to the Senate.

Buying time

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

"BUYING time." That seemed to be the theme of the President's State of the Nation Address Monday.

It was short, the shortest speech of her presidency, and was entirely in English. It was obvious the address was targeted to specific audiences: to the English-speaking business community and middle class, who obviously have yet to make up their minds on the current controversy besetting her administration; and to her supporters inside the Batasan, who certainly appeared to like what they heard.

While previous Sonas sought through high-flown rhetoric and populist appeals to inspire the nation and prove, especially to the disenfranchised poor, that the government and ruling class have their interests at heart, this one featured no such attempts at eliciting empathy. It began on a boastful, confident note, with the President sweeping through her administration's economic achievements. The middle-class fear of uncertainty and looming chaos was stoked, with Ms Arroyo calling for an end to "divisiveness," and for all to "limit the collateral damage on a country poised for takeoff."

Clearly, the President and her advisers saw no need to directly address the country's poor, who have shown little inclination in her four years in office to grant her their overwhelming support or even sympathy. The Sona was no longer an opportunity for widening her base, rather, it became a chance to solidify her shrinking constituency, to prevent any further dissipation of support.

If her support is dwindling, that would not have been obvious to the President last Monday afternoon, with administration legislators and local government executives interrupting her address more than 30 times with increasingly fervid rounds of applause and cheers, culminating in shouts of "G-M-A! G-M-A!"

* * *

THE PRESIDENT spoke of a country divided, of how we are living in "two countries under the same name."

Indeed, those two countries were in full display last Monday. One country was that lorded over by the political elite, the well-dressed perfumed crowd inside the Batasan session hall driven to near-hysteria by GMA's overt support for Charter change. She pandered to their specific interests: the legislators' favored means of extending their terms through a shift to the parliamentary system, and local government executives' pet measure of federalism, which could only mean increased power and wealth in their hands.

It was as if President Arroyo and her allies lived in another country altogether, one where her basic mandate is not under question, and where she herself is not under indictment for what she accused "politicians" (who were very much in evidence at the hall) of doing: "straining the present political system to its final limit."

It was certainly a different country on display along Commonwealth, where a record crowd of protesters gathered to demand the truth about the "Garci" tapes, and accountability from our President. It was certainly a different country around the various urban centers, where transport strikes and protest actions persisted despite the rains.

The Sona may well have been GMA's last chance to finally come clean. That she chose to appeal to a narrow band of the faithful instead of reaching out to those outside of the circle may well be the epitaph of her presidency.

* * *

IT was a long road to the "First Cancer Fun Run" last Sunday, organized by Bosom Care, a Bacolod-based support group made up of and working for breast cancer survivors.

As Bosom Care president Cecile Locsin Nava tells it, they had dreamed of becoming a foundation since their founding in 2003, but have been repeatedly frustrated by the Securities and Exchange Commission. "In 2003, I went to the SEC with P50,000 in hard-earned cash, only to be told to come back after we have raised P100,000. It took another year of fundraising and begging to raise the additional amount. But when I came back in 2004, I was told the ante had been raised to P1 million because many politicians use foundations as a front to launder money. I protested to the SEC that this policy is discriminatory and marginalizes the real NGOs because politicians can very well come up with the needed (amount) while it will probably take us decades to raise that amount. Nevertheless, the requirement stayed. So, it was back to the drawing board for us."

Then, in June last year, Fr. Robert Reyes came to Bacolod for the first death anniversary of a friend who had died from lung cancer and decided to run from the airport to the Bacolod Plaza to dramatize his drive against smoking. Cecile was one of two Bosom Care members to run with Father Robert and from this she got the idea of raising funds through a "fun run."

* * *

ALSO providing inspiration was Terry Fox, a Canadian runner who, despite having a leg amputated due to cancer, managed to raise over $300 million for cancer research; and the "Susan Komen Run," started in 1983 in the United States by Susan's sister Nancy Brinker "with $200 collected in a shoebox" that has since raised millions for cancer research.

The "Cancer Fun Run" drew participants of all ages. The youngest was a 6-year-old boy while the oldest was cancer survivor Felina Santiago. Avon was recognized for sending the biggest number of participants among the company sponsors (it was also one of the first to respond), while the University of St. La Salle received a trophy for gathering more than 2,000 registrants.

Alan John Sitchon, a La Salle student, won a trophy for being the first to cross the finish line.

Many thanks to Cecile and the other members of Bosom Care, especially our "driver" for the day, Joey Solinap who's become a cancer advocate (among other causes) after the death of his mother, for the hospitality and the inspiration!

RP's greatest dancer

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

WHEN friends wish and pray for a chance to perform at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, I usually caution them to be careful what they wish for. Teresa de Avila warns us that more tears are shed over answered prayers than unanswered ones. One never really knows what other things come with a gift package, like the warriors hidden in the legendary Trojan horse.

I have since given up on being able to sing or dance or act, yet I found myself onstage in the CCP last week, not once but thrice, delivering speeches that I hope were, at the very least, short and entertaining.

Last Friday, a state funeral was held for Leonor Orosa Goquingco, National Artist for Dance. During the ceremonies, I remembered a time in my life when I planned to see the world for free by joining the Bayanihan Dance troupe. Manila Mayor Lito Atienza did the same thing in his youth and in the process not only learned to dance but also found a pretty wife and started a lifelong romance with loud Hawaiian shirts. When I approached Isabel Santos and Lucrecia Kasilag about this, I asked for what I thought to be a bit role, "Can I just carry the umbrella over the princess in Singkil?" They looked at me and laughed because this was one of the most difficult dances in the repertoire. My hopes dashed, I turned to historical writing.

Sitting in the Main Theater contemplating the life and achievements of Leonor Orosa Goquingco made me realize that at the end of life, you are just remains in a box onstage with two honor guards. However, one of the consolations of the belief in the afterlife is that the spirit moves on from the cage that is a mortal body into another realm of light, peace and joy. As we struggle to survive daily life by making fun of the political situation and politicians who, unfortunately, make our lives miserable, we cannot be faulted for wishing to be in another place, another time—but not just yet. Not now.

Seeing Leonor Orosa Goquingco at previous necrological services for National Artists who went before her was an experience in empathy and pity. Here was a frail old lady who had to be assisted, or literally carried on stage, to enable her to pay her last respects to a fallen peer by placing a flower in a vase in front of the bier. Watching her make those slow, measured and obviously painful steps made it difficult to even imagine that she was one of the greatest dancers in Philippine history.

Some unkind souls in the audience jokingly referred to the seats of the National Artists as the "pre-departure area." Napoleon Abueva, who was conferred the award in 1976 together with Leonor, quoted her as saying, "Billy, *tayo na lang natira sa* batch 1976... *Matira ang matibay!*"

The Leonor Orosa Goquingco I knew was far from a young nimble dancer in Moorish costume standing, or should I say perfectly poised and balanced, on the tip of her toes. Nick Joaquin waxing eloquent described her in 1961 as:

"...rapt-eyed and intense-looking, mysterious as Garbo, austere as a nun. The black hair in a severe hairdo framed a pale face in which those very remarkable eyes glittered. Her body was small and fragile, a Dresden figurine; but onstage, when the music started, that body turned into flame. She was called a genius, a recluse, the greatest dancer in the Philippines."

The "Tita Leonor" I knew still had the eyes that glittered because we both shared a common interest in Rizal. As she held on to my arm like a crutch at some events when I walked her to her seat, it made me realize that as a historian one of the things I would wish to see, if and when a time machine is invented, would be her at her height dancing. Perhaps to even see the first performance of her signature work of choreography, "Filipinescas," which presented a whole view of Philippine history from pre-colonial times to the present in dance. As a historian who struggles with musty documents, moldy books, cranky colleagues and the long solitary work of putting ideas together on paper, in words that will move rather than cause stupor, it is "Filipinescas" that I want to see because it was premiered in the year I was born.

This August, we will all have the chance to see this dance epic again, a work drawn from various folk dances around the archipelago, stylized and grouped into segments that present (or should I say, re-present) Philippine history, our history in a new language that does not require words to make its message. We are told that one of her last acts before suffering a stroke was to sign a letter to the National Commission for Culture and the Arts to seek funds for a re-staging of the new "Filipinescas," set to open next month. This was her final work re-staged, improved with new music and probably updated to comment on the present.

One would hope that complete documentation will be made so that "Filipinescas" can be a guidepost for dancers, set designers, musicians, choreographers and even constipated academic historians for decades to come.

Last week, we laid Leonor Orosa Goquingco to rest at the Libingan ng mga Bayani, thankful that Philippine art and culture, or even our lives will never be the same because they were enriched by her life and work.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Talking with God

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

NAUGHTY naughty Margie Holmes and her husband Jeremy Baer... Remember their letter to the editor last week tweaking the way we like to impute divine mandates and revelations? They quoted the American psychiatrist Thomas Ssasz: "When you talk to God, that is prayer; when God talks to you, that is schizophrenia."

I just couldn't help texting Margie: "But God talks to me all the time. I just don't talk back because it would be disrespectful."

"Disrespectful?" Margy texted back.

"Yes," I replied, "you don't talk back to white old men."

Upon which Jeremy Baer, who is white and not too old, interjected: "Was that text intended for me?"

I didn't actually have the last say (text) because, well, I didn't want to be disrespectful, but I was tempted to reply, "Oh my god, God's talking to me again."

Presidents and God

Seriously, we do read God or the gods into much of what happens in our public and private lives. Think now of the way we've been bombarded, for years, by front-page photographs of our presidents in prayer. They do that because they know those photographs count, telling people we have a president who regularly talks to, maybe talks with, God.

President Macapagal-Arroyo seems to be the most photographed-in-prayer among our presidents but to be fair, she's just continuing a long presidential tradition. Even Ferdinand Marcos made it a point to have pictures taken while attending Mass, or going on retreat, although there were strong doubts about how religious he was (there were even allegations of shifting allegiances between Roman Catholicism and the Philippine Independent Church). But atoning for his lapses was Imelda, who converted prayer into major political and fashion events. Remember her famous rosaries, one of which was said to be made of diamonds?

Do we ever think of these presidents—or Imelda—as mad? Not really. Well, yes, maybe, but not in association with their praying.

And the Lord said

Let me digress a bit. Margie and Jeremy's irreverent quote from Ssasz reminded me of an observation made by one of the country's more prominent psychiatrists: the tendency for American psychiatrists to diagnose schizophrenia more quickly with Filipino patients.

I'm not surprised. We don't just talk to God; we talk with Him. How many times have you listened to your *tita* or *tito* (or maybe even Tatay or Nanay) recounting a recent crisis: "So, you know, I prayed to God to give me guidance. How I prayed really! I told him, Lord, listen *naman* and advise me, please Lord. And you know what, the Lord answered me. He told me to be patient, to bear my cross like He did. And I said; 'Lord, thank you.' And you know what the Lord said?..."

We don't think twice about that *tita* or *tatay* going bonkers, but if he or she tells that story while lying on an American psychiatrist's couch, the doctor is bound to get very suspicious, wondering if maybe the patient is hearing voices...hmmm, maybe schizo...

Now what happens when politicians claim God told them to run, or to lead the country? I've lost count of how many of our politicians have made that claim. Do we think they're schizophrenic?

Of course not. Some people might actually believe the politician, especially if he's an evangelical leader. Note though that evangelicals themselves are split about this, many believing that God doesn't want religion and politics mixing, and that a religious leader claiming God's mandate isn't to be trusted.

Others will just dismiss all this as showman (or showwoman)ship. But no one, even the irreligious, actually think of them as schizo. Maybe a degree of dishonesty, yes. Or delusions of grandeur. Or megalomania. But not schizo.

Manufacturing madness

This should be a good time to explain that Thomas Ssasz, despite his being a psychiatrist, actually questioned medical terminologies. One of his books, "The Manufacture of Madness," says it all: Societies decide who's mad, and applies the different madness labels. As an anthropologist, I'd go a step further and say that we can understand a lot more about societies by looking at how they apply, or don't apply, those labels.

We don't think our politicians mad because we seriously believe people can talk with the "Lord" or "Baby Jesus" or "Mama Mary" or one's guardian angel.

Are we then a nation of schizos? If we are, we'd have to say America is, too. Way back in 1898, President William McKinley claimed he agonized through the night, trying to decide if the United States should annex Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippine Islands from Spain. You guessed it, God told him he had to, so we natives could learn about democracy and Christianity and never mind that we had set up Asia's first republic, or that we had been Catholic for three centuries.

Today, America is still headed by a president who believes he is on a divine mission. A Public Broadcasting Corp. documentary, "The Jesus Factor," aired in 2003, quoted Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, about George Bush: "And among the things he said to us (after being elected Texas governor) was, 'I believe that God wants me to be president.'" How did Bush find out? Presumably God let him know some way.

I'm not blaming the Americans for this God-talking mania. In pre-colonial times we had shamans talking to spirits. Then the friars came and said they had God's mandate. Then American evangelists and presidents said God had told them to come and liberate us from these God-inspired friars. Voices, divine and human, are just so ingrained in many cultures and, by extension, our political landscapes.

Undeniably though, in the Philippines, voices count so much more. I'd say the "Hello, Garci" tapes are just the latest modifications on our beliefs in divine communications. Depending on who you're siding with, you could say the tapes were a godsend (through the rather circuitous route of former Sen. Francisco Tatad and the Opus Dei) or came straight out of hell (through the rather circuitous route of...).

One of these days some politician is going to come out claiming he or she has a divine mandate to govern, while brandishing a CD with the evidence that God told him (or her) so.

Closer in time, yesterday's front page of the INQUIRER noted: "GMA brings House down: 5 ovations and 22 applauses." Goodness gracious, Saint Ignatius, this miraculous conversion from animosity to adulation should convince us that truly, the President's State of the Nation Address and the audience must have been inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Maybe the question isn't so much "Are our presidents mad?" as "Are we mad for believing what our presidents want us to believe?"

The INQUIRER is a member of the
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It is everybody's business

THIS is in response to a June 21 INQUIRER report titled "RP losing P100 B due to environment degradation—World Bank" by Christine Gaylican and Blanche S. Rivera.

For the Philippines to lose P100 billion annually, especially at a time when it is currently struggling to overcome an economic crisis, is mind-boggling. As I read the news item, I realized that environmental degradation triggers a "domino effect," which is not good for society, particularly on matters related to economic stability.

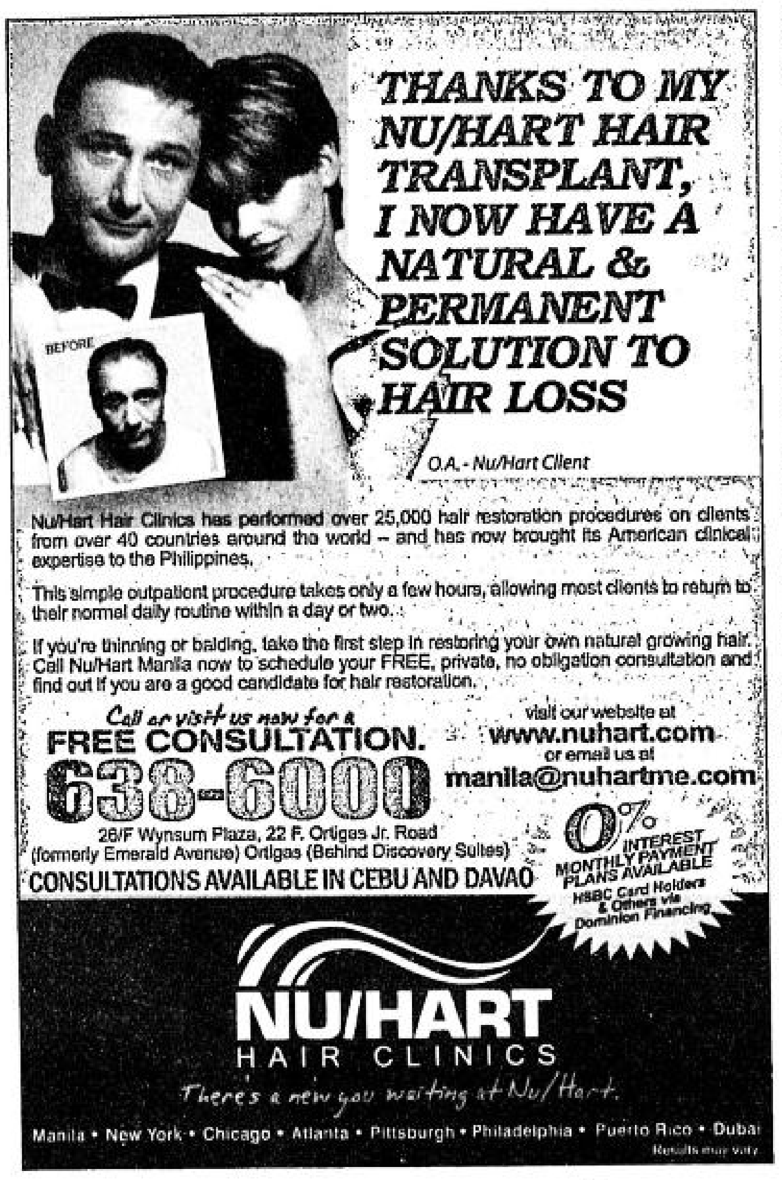
First, environmental degradation, in the form of soil erosion and poor water quality, lessens job opportunities because the traditional sources of income, such as agriculture and fisheries, cease to be sustainable.

The Philippines, being an archipelago, is surrounded by large bodies of water. A great number of our people depend so much on our rich marine resources and pristine beaches (that attract thousands of tourists every year) for their daily food. In 2004, 428,755 tourists went to Boracay. This is 26.31 percent higher than the 339,434 tourists that went there in 2003. These data only show that these resources are essential assets; for part of our income comes from the tourism industry.

Your article on the World Bank report serves as another wake-up call for every Filipino. Thus, I can't agree more with World Bank-Philippines director Joachim von Amsberg when he said that effective environmental management can reduce this environmental dilemma. I firmly believe that caring for our motherland is the duty not just of our government officials; it is everybody's business and concern. If only every Filipino would act as a responsible citizen, then we can recover these losses.

Remember: "Big things come in small packages." An act as simple as segregating our trash will help us minimize environmental degradation. Act now before it's too late.

—JOYCE R. SANTOS,
Pitpitan Bulacan, Bulacan,
simply_joyce08@yahoo.com



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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Out of context

AS a discerning reader, I am disappointed with some news and editorial items in the INQUIRER and in many newspapers in the country, alluding that US Chargé d'Affaires Joseph Mussomeli had ever mentioned that the resigned Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima et al., the so-called "Hyatt 10," are patriots. He was clearly quoted out of context.

In the transcript of the ANC interview, Ricky Carandang asked the opinion of the chargé d'affaires whether the resigned Cabinet officials are adventurous. The American diplomat answered, "I know some of them very well, and the ones I know, frankly, have accepted these posts as an act of patriotism and are concerned for the welfare of the people. They could make a lot more money and have a lot more prestigious roles in the private sector, but they have chosen to be in the Cabinet."

Clearly, what the chargé d'affaires referred to as an act of patriotism was the act of accepting a Cabinet post and not the act of resigning from it. Clearly, Mussomeli never said or alluded that Purisima et al. are patriots when they resigned from their Cabinet posts. Why do some respected reporters, columnists and editors overlook this very simple information?

—NESTOR N. FAJARDO,
Baguio City,
magsibul@yahoo.com

Impossible requirements for PSU accreditation

PUBLIC Sector Unions (PSUs), whose members are frontline service providers, have and will always be the cornerstone of public service delivery.

Executive Order 180, series of 1987, paved the way for the legal recognition of unions in the public sector. However, under the EO, PSUs cannot engage in collective negotiation agreements (CNAs) unless they are accredited. But the revised IRR (implementing rules and regulations) for this EO has made accreditation a "superman's job."

To be accredited, a PSU must have as members at least 30 percent—instead of the previous 10 percent—of the total number of the rank and file employees in its local office.

Moreover, the revised EO amended the definition of the organizational units for purposes of accreditation. PSUs applying for accreditation should have as members at least 50 percent + 1 of the rank and file not only of their local offices, but of the entire rank and file of the department—meaning, all the employees in its central office and corresponding regional and other local offices. The past IRR recognized PSUs in local offices as organizational units themselves.

These requirements for PSU accreditation are difficult for the rank and file to comply with, given that the national government offices are spread across the country. These requirements are easier said than done, and we can only be wary so that our "right to negotiate collectively" is not taken away from us.

We, in the Public Services Labor Independent Confederation (PSLINK), don't see the reason why the Public Sector Labor Management Council (PSLMC) has come up with these ridiculous requirements. The council members know fully well that the original IRR was already a cause for the low number of accredited PSUs and signed CNAs.

It is a known fact that unionism in the government has never surpassed its infancy stage. The sluggish growth of PSUs can be blamed on the traditional perception that unions are just troublemakers. This is not true with PSUs. We have been able to show that we are able to effect developmental change, which the government cannot achieve by its lonesome.

However, as the EO and its revised IRR (which, we see, provides for an institutionalized union-busting scheme) show, the government insists on its bias against PSUs. Thus, the CNAs will remain an illusion for government employees.

Maintaining decent wages in accordance with the rapidly increasing cost of living, working conditions that directly determine the workers health and the service they deliver, representation in decision-making bodies crucial to the employees' welfare—all these would ultimately be left to the discretion of the management, because unions will find it extremely difficult to meet the requirements for PSU recognition.

—ANNIE ENRIQUEZ-GERON,
general secretary,
Public Services Labor Independent Confederation (PSLINK), 15 Clarion Lily St.,
St. Dominic Subd. 1,
Congressional Avenue, QC

Romanticized sexism

THE LETTER of Elias Diaz, spokesman of the Communist Party of the Philippines' internal revolutionary ethics committee, on the "abomination" of same-sex marriage (PDI, 7/6/05) sets the record straight on where socialists and the general public should stand on the issue.

Many nationalists support Akbayan Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales' "anti-discriminatory bill," which seeks to allow same-sex marriage. We need not become religious believers to know the ideological folly here. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (now defunct) and Communist China both outlawed sodomy as "abnormal," while "religious" bourgeoisie and countries in the West consider it fashionable to this day.

Discrimination arises when there is unlike treatment of parties in similar situations. This is not the case between hetero- and homosexual unions. By nature and consequence they are different and, therefore, equitability demands that one be granted particular privileges over another. Nature itself denied same-sex marriage the power to procreate, even artificially. Society secures its foundation in marriage when it contemplates ideal conditions for procreation and socialization, based on natural laws.

Let homosexuals pair as they wish but it's another thing to "formalize" or "solemnize" such unions. Entitlements cannot be granted on parodies of family life (*bahay-bahayan*) and similar bourgeois romanticisms. Through the ages, there had been different formulations of what marriage constitutes, but basic biology teaches us that the male species is for the female.

A same-sex bond is sexist. Such unions segregate couples to all-male or all-female. Sexism is to prefer one's own "sex kind." There's no "diversity" in such a union that denies the synergy, symmetry and complementarity that the opposite sex brings. There's no state interest in this romanticized sexism.

—NICOLO F. BERNARDO,
nicolofbernardo@yahoo.com

Shameful admission

WHY the fuss about cheating when it has become a pattern of behavior for our people?

Borrowing the words of Dr. Felipe de Guzman on his paper "Ethnic Identity of the Metamorphosed Filipino," he says that "today's Filipino is no longer the honest one as he used to be." It is shameful to admit it, but the basic motivation in the life of Filipinos is to win at all cost.

We cheat to pass examinations, bar exams, board exams, teachers exams; and, likewise, we cheat to get elected into office. We travel abroad with fake passports, visas and birth certificates. We use "jumpers" to cheat on our electric power consumption. The ad "*Hindi ba bad yon?*" on illegal Sky Cable connections supports the belief that cheating is good provided you don't get caught.

What's sad is that even teachers, who are supposed to be the guardians of our leaders of tomorrow, hire ghost writers to write their masteral/doctoral dissertations and even fake their credentials.

Wake up Philippines, and accept the truth that cheating has become our way of life, and our only hope is our younger generation who may yet engender a new leadership to eradicate this social cancer which is eating up the character of the Filipino.

Let the politician who claims he does not cheat be the first to cast a stone at Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo; but beware, for God is watching. On your judgment day, you will be asked to account for all the cheating you have done. Were you not a philandering husband? Did you not cheat on your income tax return? Did you accept bribes here and there? The divine book will not need any videotapes to authenticate what you have done. Up there, no one can create lies.

Let the country move on with hopes in our hearts that our younger generation, with the help of Almighty God, build a better Philippines for us.

—SALLY C. DATOC,
92 Bignay St.,
Quirino 2A, Project 2, QC

Failed political leadership

WHAT'S happening in the Philippines is quite sickening for a Filipino like me. I have been away from the country for quite sometime but I never stopped monitoring developments there.

The political leadership has failed us miserably. These so-called leaders are nothing but a bunch of greedy, back-stabbing animals with no conscience and regard for the people or the nation, at all. They all profess otherwise, but the present poor showing of the country is a testament to their failure. The other countries in Southeast Asia have long surpassed us or are about to. But does this mean anything to these animals? Damn the country as long as they and their families and friends will get into the system and can rob the country blind.

Let me add one more thing: The military had better stay out of this. Those bright boys from the Philippine Military Academy should know where they belong. I hope they were taught that lesson in that so-called academy.

—AUGUSTO MARTINEZ,
dcrubet3@yahoo.com

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US firm pays ₱250M to N. Vizcaya

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—The scheduled public auction of the assets of a power plant here on Tuesday turned into a celebration following the release of a P250.7-million check to local officials by the plant's owner.

The move ended the more than a year of legal battle between the Nueva Vizcaya government and the California Energy Casecnan Water and Energy Co. Inc. (CE Casecnan) over unpaid real property taxes. CE Casecnan operates the Casecnan multipurpose irrigation and power project (CMIPP) in Alfonso Castañeda town.

Gov. Luisa Cuaresma on Tuesday broke the "good news" to a crowd of provincial and municipal employees here who came to witness the supposed public auction of the CMIPP.

The auction was called off after CE Casecnan settled its tax obligations to the government on Monday afternoon.

"We are very happy that [CE Casecnan] finally paid. This [amount] will be of great help for our people. This is a victory ... of all Novo Vizcayanos," Cuaresma said.

Lawyer Epifanio Galima Jr., provincial administrator, said CE Casecnan's payment came as a reward for more than a year of unified efforts of the people of Nueva Vizcaya to go after the company's tax obligations.

"We had to go through a lot of challenges and obstacles, but we never wavered. We were just happy that despite the limited resources that we had, it had come to this," Galima said.

CE Casecnan's payment is the largest tax income the province has received in its 166-year history, according to Perfecto Martinez Jr., provincial treasurer and chair of the provincial auction committee.

On Monday afternoon, lawyer Anthony Mark Gutierrez, CE Casecnan representative, handed over to Cuaresma a manager's check representing the full payment P250.7 million.

The amount covered P186.2 million in unpaid real property taxes, P59.6 million in penalties and P4.9 million in "administrative cost," which had accumulated since the CMIPP started operations in December 2001.

Gutierrez also delivered a letter from Linda Castillo, CE Casecnan vice president and general counsel, indicating that the company was paying "under protest and without prejudice" to rights and remedies available to it under the law.

"Since your offices have insisted on holding a public auction ... of the subject properties, CE Casecnan has been left with no option other than to pay the real property taxes," she said in a letter to Martinez and Corazon Sumawang, Alfonso Castañeda treasurer. *Melvin Gascon and Ben Moses Ebreo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Anti-GMA solon finds Gloria at dad's wake

LUCENA CITY—A veteran politician that she is, President Macapagal-Arroyo seems to be back on the campaign trail—this time, wooing former allies who have signed their names on the impeachment complaint filed by the political opposition in the first regular session of Congress on Monday.

Yesterday, President Arroyo visited the wake of Hermilando Alcala, the grand patriarch of one of the respected political dynasties in Quezon and the father of neophyte Quezon Rep. Proceso Alcala (1st District, LP) who incidentally was the last congressman who affixed his signature on the impeachment complaint.

The late political patriarch was a former Lucena City councilor and vice mayor, provincial board member and vice governor.

He died of complications of various illnesses on Monday afternoon.

Ms Arroyo, dressed in a black long sleeve blouse and black pants, arrived at the Alcala ancestral house located inside the compound of the old pier in Barangay Cotta at around 2:35 p.m.

Gina de Venecia, wife of House Speaker Jose de Venecia, accompanied the President. The two were met by former Rep. Aleta Suarez, wife of incumbent Quezon lawmaker Danilo, and their son, Vice Governor David Suarez.

After the President paid her last respects to the departed politician, a member of the Presidential Management Staff gathered Congressman Alcala and his seven siblings in a secluded corner of the house to have a private conversation with her.

And away from the prying ears of the media, Ms Arroyo and the Alcala siblings talked for 30 minutes.

The President also met other politicians in the family like Quezon board member Vicente Alcala and incumbent Lucena City Vice Mayor Dondon Alcala.

After the private meeting, Alcala quickly denied that Ms Arroyo tried to persuade him to withdraw his endorsement of the impeachment complaint.

"In fairness to the President, she did not even mention any word about the impeachment. She just asked the family what help she could still offer. And we appreciated her sincere gesture," the lawmaker said. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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NPAs storm cement firm that won't pay 'taxes'

CAMP GEN. ALEJO SANTOS, Bulacan—At least 20 suspected New People's Army rebels stormed the compound of a cement manufacturing plant in Norzagaray town and blasted equipment and facilities there on Monday night, police said.

No one was reported hurt in the 8 p.m. attack at the compound of the Monark Cement Co. and its contractor, Holcim Construction Corp., in the upland village of Minuyan, police said.

Police said the rebels disarmed the company's guards and burned the company's power generation panel board.

The rebels then planted dynamite sticks on the building housing the Monark's offices and warehouse and ordered the employees there to leave the compound.

The explosion from the dynamite sticks burned parts of the building and damaged a backhoe and a drilling machine, a trailer truck, two pick up trucks and an Isuzu Elf truck.

Senior Supt. Benjamin Michael Fokno, Bulacan police director, estimated the damage at P5 million.

He said the suspects also took a Nissan Terrano used as a service vehicle of Holcim, cellular phones and hand-held radio sets of the company's personnel and the service firearms of security guards.

Senior Supt. Abelardo Villacorta, chief of the Central Luzon police's operations and plans division, said the rebels attacked after the company refused to pay them P6 million in revolutionary tax.

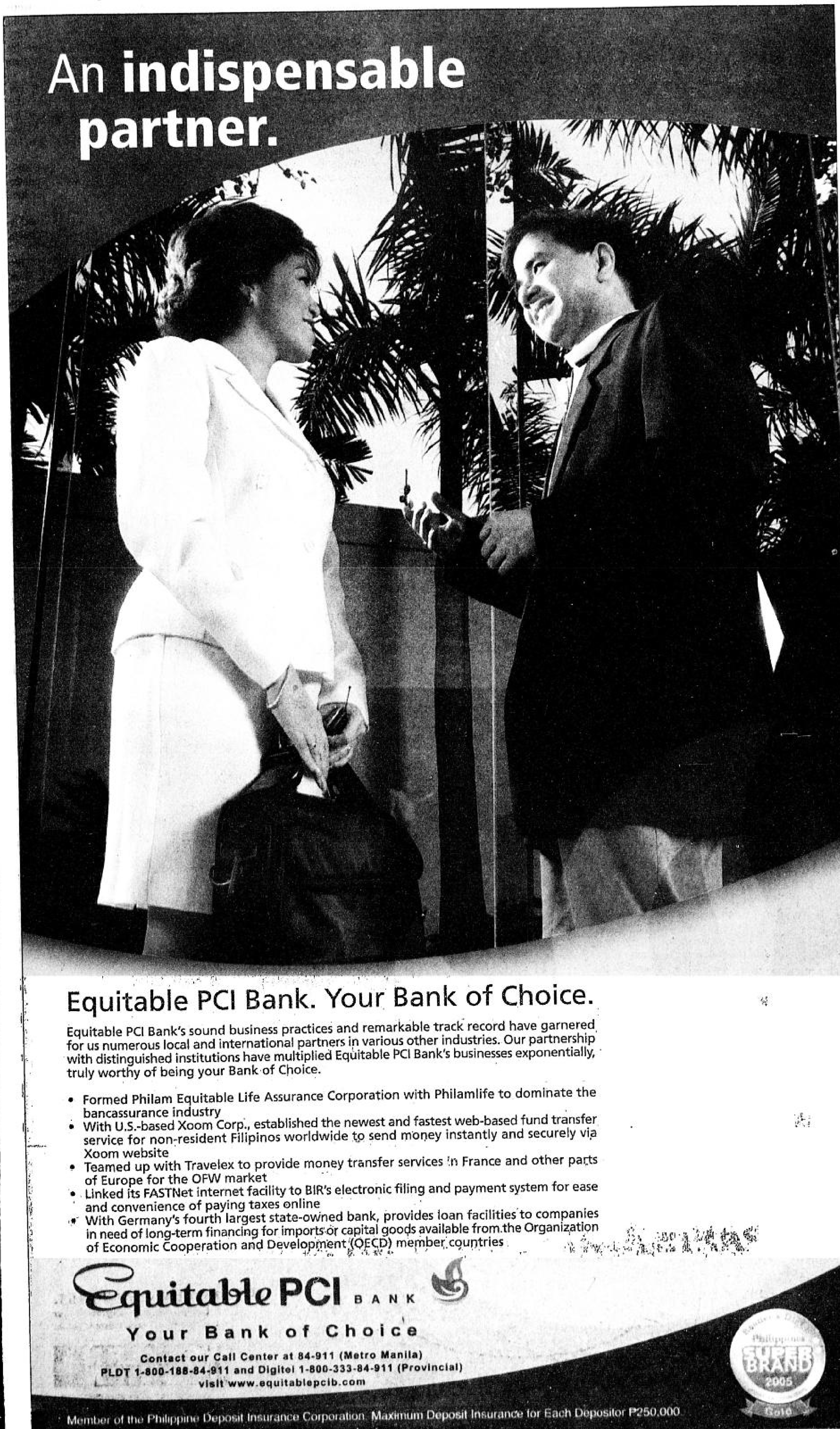
It was the first attack on the company that had been operating in the town for years.

Reports said Army soldiers were stationed in a detachment in the nearby village of Matictic but they failed to detect the rebels' movements and prevent the attack on the cement plant.

Carmela Reyes and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

ENERGY SAVERS
A vendor peddles charcoal stoves in Baguio City hoping to cash in on high fuel costs and the desire of many households to shift to less expensive ways of cooking or heating food.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Health execs raise alarm on dengue rise

By Jolene R. Bulambot
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—An official of the Department of Health in Central Visayas (DOH-7) yesterday expressed alarm over the rise in the number of dengue cases in Central Visayas, particularly in several areas in Cebu province.

Suzana Madrietta, acting DOH-7 director, said 1,298 cases with 26 deaths were reported from Cebu, Bohol, Negros Oriental and Siquijor as of July 26 this year.

The number went up by more than 50 percent compared to the same period last year when only 537 dengue cases with eight fatalities were reported in the region.

"It's already alarming but still it has not reached an epidemic proportion. If the incidents continue to rise, then perhaps we may reach that level," said Madrietta.

She added most of the reported cases came from Cebu City and province. She, however, did not provide a breakdown of the figures.

"We still have to get the exact data from the other provinces. But so far, based on what we have now Cebu City ranks number one followed by the component cities in the province of Cebu. This is because we are densely populated here compared to the other areas," she said.

The number of dengue cases in Cebu City reached 497 followed by Mandaue City with 77 cases, Talisay City with 71 cases, Lapulapu City, 51 cases and Toledo with 45 cases.

Madrietta said the DOH-7 had advised several local government units and schools to intensify and reactivate the barangay dengue brigades, a campaign to teach residents in the communities how to eliminate the breeding grounds of dengue-causing mosquitoes.

She said a clean environment was a deterrent to the rise in the number of dengue cases since mosquitoes thrived in filthy areas with stagnant water.

PNP says C. Luzon still 'jueteng-free'

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—The illegal numbers game *jueteng* has yet to return in any of the seven provinces in Central Luzon, contrary to claims made by a confessed *jueteng* bagman, a top police official in the region said.

Chief Supt. Alejandro Lapinid, Central Luzon police director, said there was "no such thing" as "full blast" *jueteng* operations in Nueva Ecija, Bataan and Zambales since July 15 as Richard Garcia, a witness in the Senate's *jueteng* investigation, had claimed.

"It's an insult especially to Bataan because local officials there have signed a covenant vowing to make their province *jueteng*-free," Lapinid told the INQUIRER on Tuesday.

He said weekly updates by provincial and city police directors as well as Senior Supt. Perfecto Palad, chief of the regional anti-illegal gambling task force, did not contain reports on the return of the underground lottery.

There were attempts by a Metro Manila-based operator to restart the game in Talavera, Nueva Ecija, in the first week of July but these, Lapinid said, were stopped through a series of raids.

"There is no *jueteng* in Central Luzon," he said.

The Philippine National Police intensified its operations against *jueteng* following allegations that Ms Arroyo's relatives were receiving payoffs from its operators.

The President denied she had benefited from *jueteng* money. Her relatives also denied the allegations that they received or sought *jueteng* protection money.

INQUIRER sources in the regional police supported Lapinid's claims, saying they had not been getting their *jueteng payola* in the last three months.

Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

ROUNDUP

3 hacked to death

CALAMBA CITY—A telephone call from a resident led to the discovery of the bodies of three stay-in employees of a hardware store who were hacked to death inside their workplace by still unidentified suspects in Sta. Cruz, Laguna early Monday. Police said the victims, Teddy Antioco, 50; Lita Mendoza, 30; and Ricardo Marte, 27, died from numerous deep hack wounds in their bodies. Police said Antioco was the caretaker while Mendoza and Marte worked as storekeepers of Mercantry Enterprises located at the market place of Barangay Poblacion 5.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Suspected gambling lord slain

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Two unidentified motorcycle-riding men gunned down a suspected gambling lord here on Sunday evening. But Senior Supt. Alfredo Toroctocon, city police director, said they were still trying to look into the motive behind the killing of Paquito Lim, 50. Lim was with his brother-in-law identified as Reynald Sta. Maria when the two gunmen suddenly appeared along P. Acharon Boulevard and shot the victims. Sta. Maria was critically wounded in the attack.

Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Help sought vs logging, 'kaingin'

DUMAGUETE CITY—Negros Oriental Gov. George Arnaiz has called on the Army and Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Units (Cafgus) in the province to help in the campaign against slash-and-burn farming and illegal logging in the mountains. Arnaiz also asked the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to deputize the Army and the Cafgus in implementing forestry laws. In his meeting with Col. Norman Flores, 61st Infantry Battalion Commander, and other Army officers last week, Arnaiz expressed concern over the continued slash and burn activities in the mountains, especially in Sta. Catalina, Siaton, Valencia and San Jose towns. He said he was worried that the province's reforestation project in the different mountain barangays would be jeopardized.

Romy Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau

Seaman dies of AIDS

BACOLOD CITY—A Negrense seaman died this month due to complications brought about by the dreaded Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), according to the City Health Office. Dr. Jovy Vergara, assistant city health officer, declined to identify the fatality and details surrounding his death except that he was 30 years old who died at a private hospital in Bacolod early morning and was buried in the afternoon of the same day. Sources said health authorities were also monitoring the health condition of the seaman's family, especially his wife, to determine if they were afflicted of the virus that caused the AIDS. Under the Implementing Rules and Regulations on HIV/AIDS, medical records of patients with Human Immunodeficiency Virus and AIDS are kept confidential to protect their rights to privacy.

Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

Born Again pastor held for murder

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Police on Sunday arrested the head pastor and two other members of a Born Again sect in Sta. Cruz, Laguna shortly after attending their church service for allegedly masterminding the murder of one of their members. Police identified the suspects as Glorious Fountain of Life head pastor Dorcas Tec, 51; Sonia Gabatin, 49; and Timoteo Roset, 53. The three were arrested by the Sta. Cruz municipal police at around noon by virtue of warrants of arrest issued by Judge Divinagracia Ongkiko of the Sta. Cruz Regional Trial Court.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Ex-NBI agent nabbed

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—The Calabarzon police arrested a former agent of the National Bureau of Investigation for illegal possession of firearms inside a posh subdivision in Sta. Rosa City over the weekend. Police said the Regional Special Operations Group raided the house of suspect Edmund Talens, 42, in Laguna Bel-Air 1 Subdivision in Barangay Don Jose, Sta. Rosa City on Saturday afternoon by virtue of a search warrant issued by Judge Cesar Mangrobang of the Imus Regional Trial Court. The raid yielded one M-16 rifle, one Beretta 9mm pistol, a Smith and Wesson cal. 22 pistol and several rounds of ammunition for various guns. Versoza said Talens was arrested after he failed to show documents and licenses to possess the firearms.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

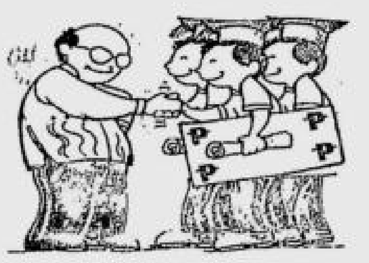
Solid waste body convened

AY SHA WAKATH!

CITY OF CALAPAN—The Provincial Solid Waste Management Board was convened recently by Oriental Mindoro Gov. Arnan Panaligan. Composed of local officials, members of non-government organizations and representatives from the recycling, manufacturing and packaging industry, the board will look into making money out of garbage, reducing pollution and giving support to local government units undertaking solid waste management. It was approved during the term of the late Gov. Bartolome Marasigan Sr. but the implementing rules only came out with the approval of the Environmental Code in 2003, said Mike Jumig, acting provincial government environment and natural resources officer.

Madonna Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

126 Lucena scholars

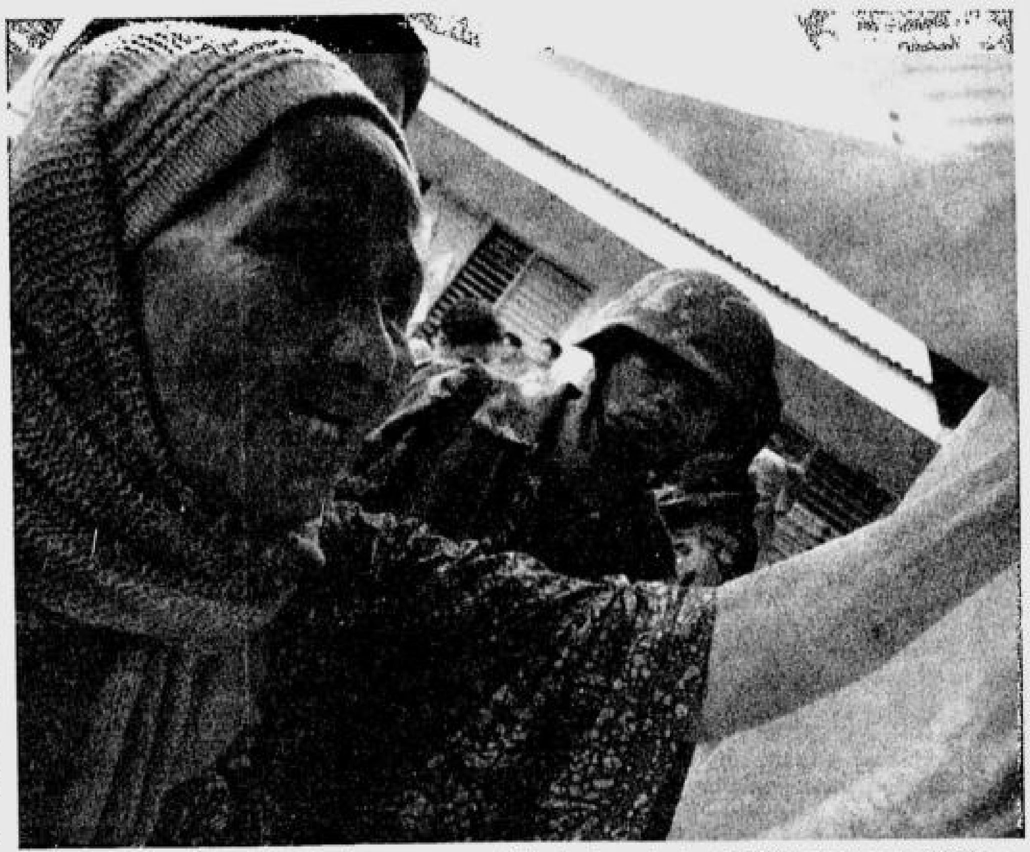


LUCENA CITY—A total of 126 poor but deserving students received educational scholarship grants from Lucena City Mayor Ramon Talaga Jr. as part of the local government educational financial assistance through the "Balik Paaralan" program. The mayor distributed the scholarship grants in a simple ceremony at the Punzalan Gymnasium that was attended by local officials and families of the students. The scholars, composed of 67 students in the elementary level, 58 in high school and one in college—were selected in eight barangays.

Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

ARMM ELECTIONS

Namfrel unsure of role in polls



A WOMAN voter searches for her name on a list of voters during ARMM elections in 2001, a scene likely to be repeated on Aug. 8.

PDI FILE PHOTO

ZAMBOANGA CITY—The military has formed teams to assist the Commission on Elections during the Aug. 8 elections in the five-province Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

Marine Brig. General Ben Dolorfino said one of these groups was tasked with monitoring and preventing irregularities during the elections.

The formation of the task groups came in the wake of a statement made by Comelec Commissioner Mehol Sadain that the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) might not be able to conduct a quick count during the elections.

Sadain, who is commissioner-in-charge for Basilan, said that Namfrel failed to comply with some requirements supposedly for its accreditation in the ARMM elections.

But Sadain said even without the Namfrel, the check and balance could be provided by the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting or PPCRV.

"Our mission here is to make the ARMM election fraud free. We don't have any room for any failure," Dolorfino said of the military's effort to ensure the conduct of clean elections in the region.

Renato Magbutay, Comelec director for the ARMM, said to ensure a violence-free elections, the military also fielded more soldiers to areas around the ARMM.

"This is the time to showcase (how clean and honest the ARMM election) and to redeem ourselves from all the scandals and controversies," Magbutay, who was designated as over-all coordinator for Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-tawi, said.

Southern Command chief Lt. General Alberto Braganza said to avoid violence, politicians were also cautioned against hiring extra security personnel.

"We are mandated to arrest any armed civilian securing politicians unless the security is authorized by the Comelec," Braganza said.

"We are reminding local politicians about Comelec Resolution 7477, which strictly bans armed civilians as escorts," Dolorfino, also chief of the Task Force Hope, said.

Dolorfino said candidates in the ARMM elections could only be allowed with a maximum of five escorts, who should be from the military or the police.

As this developed, the brother-mayor of ARMM gubernatorial candidate Guimid Matalam survived an ambush in Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao on Monday.

Police authorities said Pagalungan Vice Mayor Norodin Matalam and his security escorts were on their way home from Cotabato City when fired upon by unidentified men around 5:20 p.m.

"It was least expected because the place is known to be very peaceful," Matalam said after the attack.

Matalam said one of the suspects also fired an M79 grenade but it failed to explode after hitting the van.

"We were lucky, because had it exploded we could have been killed," he said.

Matalam also denied earlier reports that his candidate-brother was with him during the attack.

Charlie Señase, Edwin Fernandez, Julie Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Anti-GMA ralliers sued for pillboxes

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—The police on Tuesday filed charges of illegal possession of explosives against 97 members of the party-list groups Bayan Muna and Gabriela after police found pillboxes in one of their vehicles on Monday.

Police said the group members were bound for Metro Manila to attend protest rallies during President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address.

A report here said a jeepney used by the protesters was found loaded with at least 10 pillboxes and a knife during a search at a police checkpoint in Barangay Tungkong Mangga in San Jose del Monte City, Bulacan.

The jeepney is owned by Joel Mempin, 35. He was held for questioning.

"Many could have been hurt if those pillboxes were used [during the protests]. There could have been carnage on the streets," said Chief Supt. Alejandro Lapinid, Central Luzon police director.

But Roman Polintan, chair of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan in Central Luzon, said the pillboxes were "planted" by the police.

"It's an old trick being done since the [late strongman Ferdinand] Marcos' time," Polintan said.

Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Ang Iglesia ni Kristo, mula nang ito'y lumaganap at naging bahagi ng ating buhay ispiritwal, ay patuloy na dumadalangin tungo sa kapayapaan at pagkakaisa ng buong sambayanan.

Sa loob halos ng isang daang taon mula nang ito'y itinatag ni Ka Felix Manalo, ang Iglesia ni Kristo ay nakaukit na sa ating kasaysayan. Ang mga pangangaral at pananampalataya nito ay kabahagi na rin sa paghubog ng isang lipunang makatao, makatarungan at higit sa lahat makadiyos.

Kami'y bumabati sa Iglesia ni Kristo kasama sina Ka Erdy, Ka Eddie at ang lahat ng mga bumubuo nito sa kanilang ika-91 anibersaryo.

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MAYOR VILMA SANTOS-RECTO
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INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

COALITION members: Zenaida Hamada-Pawid, Ruby Giron, Dr. Julie Cabato, Ces Pita, Rosario Cordero, Anna Maria Buenafe, Julie Corpuz and Mandy Pader. EV ESPIRITU

Ordinary folk behind fight against John Hay tax perks

By Vincent Cabreza
Baguio City

FLORIAN Kristel Pe is a student. Diane Mondok is a teacher. Roy Munsayac is a hotel manager. Lulu Dulay is a Catholic nun.

Theirs are some of the faces behind the environmentalist group John Hay Alternative Coalition (JHAC), whose 10-year-old suit before the Supreme Court has now thrown into chaos the special economic zones administered by the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA).

Citing a flaw in Republic Act No. 7227 (the BCDA law), the Supreme Court's decision on Oct. 17, 2003 and its resolution on March 29, 2005 ruled in JHAC's favor when it nullified the tax benefits of Camp John Hay, as well as the zones at the former Clark Air Base in Pampanga and Tarlac, and Poro Point in La Union.

The government is confronting an estimated loss of up to P80 billion from capital flight should investors flee the BCDA-administered zones outside Subic Freeport in Zambales and Bataan, according to BCDA sources.

They said the government expected another P40-billion loss when the investors sued for damage claims.

But for JHAC members, the unexpected repercussions of their legal challenge "will be good for this country," said Ruby Giron, a government tax investigator who helped form the coalition in 1993.

At a time when Filipinos will begin to feel the impact of an enhanced value-added tax after July 1, the decision shows that the government's "unjust" taxation policies will no longer be allowed to prosper, Giron said.

"I always tax people, and here they are giving exemptions generally to big, moneyed group," she said.

Capital flight from these zones will simply "clean the slate" and force the government to offer more rational, fair and justifiable business incentives to new investors, she said, "instead of fooling them with half-baked legislation."

The JHAC petition challenged the constitutionality of Presidential Proclamation No. 420, which was issued by then President Fidel V. Ramos in 1994 to create the John Hay special economic zone (SEZ) and to grant it tax exemptions.

The JHAC's premise relies on textbook logic. "Ramos was not Congress and had therefore no authority to grant tax incentives to any company," Giron said.

In its resolution, the Supreme Court pointed out that RA 7227 did not "expressly extend" the incentives granted to the Subic special economic zone "to the other SEZs still to be created via presidential proclamation."

"It is the legislative branch [and not Ramos], which has the inherent power not only to select the subjects of taxation but also to grant exemptions," it said.

Fighting Camp John Hay's conversion into a commercial venture had npt made the JHAC popular, Giron said, and the impact of its legal victory will further reduce what is left of that popularity.

The JHAC is a loose group of old Baguio families who found unacceptable the specter of losing Camp John Hay to big business after the government recovered it from the Americans in 1991. Its members have reconvened to study the impact of the final court resolution, Giron said.

The big Subic loot

By Ansbert Joaquin
Subic Bay Freeport

WHAT'S in a shipwreck? A lot, if it's found in Subic Bay.

A seabed of sunken national treasures, Subic Bay has 25 shipwrecks (some accounts estimate 30) that tell a lot about history and the significant role it played in World Wars I and II and during the Spanish occupation.

San Quentin, the oldest known wreck, is a wooden gunboat scuttled by Spaniards in 1898 in a futile attempt to block the channel between Grande and Chiquita islands from the invading Americans.

Oryoku Maru, a Japanese outboard passenger ship, lies 60 feet deep at 300 meters off the Alava pier. It was carrying families and 1,600 American war prisoners when it was attacked by a US aircraft.

The wreck posed navigational risks to arriving US Navy ships, including aircraft carriers, when the port was still used as a US military facility. To remedy the problem, base officials flattened the wreck by blasting it.

One of its cannons is displayed in a restaurant, aptly called "The American Legion," on Magsaysay Drive in Olongapo City, just outside the Subic Bay Freeport.

Sean Maru is a 30,000-ton Japanese cargo vessel found between the Alava pier and the northern end of the Subic International Airport runway. It was sunk by the US Navy during World War II.

The USS New York, once the pride of the US fleet in Asia, is the "star" attraction because of its historical value. When the Japanese swept the US Marines out of the Philippines during the war, the Americans had no choice but to scuttle their ship as they left Subic in early 1942 to avoid its capture.

The sunken shipwrecks also serve as recreational dive sites for local and foreign tourists.

Near the shore

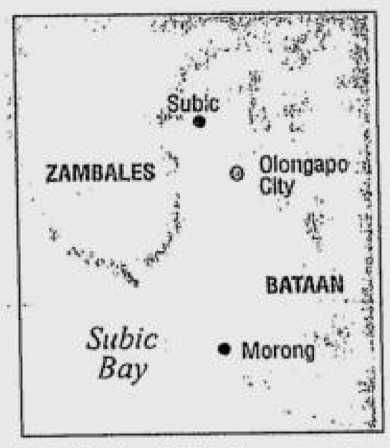
"Their attraction can be attributed to their closeness to the shoreline," said dive instructor Butch Horario.

Anilao (in Batangas) has its well-preserved corals, but Subic has its one-of-a-kind historical value, "where you can find plenty of shipwrecks in one area," he said.

The Subic shipwrecks also provide artificial habitats for more than 200 species of fish, replacing the corals that have been destroyed by poaching over the years. The marine abundance, in turn, sustains communities surrounding the bay.

For all their material and environmental value and beauty, the least that mankind can do is protect them. Yet, lately, the wrecks have been the targets of looters who threaten to destroy their historical value, recreational diving in Subic, the fish habitats, and the communities' livelihood.

THESE shipwreck treasures, gathered off Mindoro, are displayed at the Vasco restaurant-cum-museum at the Subic Bay Freeport. TONETTE T. OREJAS



Looting, according to divers, has been going on for years. And while looting cases have been on the rise lately, the treasures always end up in souvenir shops and junkyards.

While visiting the USS New York during a recreational dive on June 13, Horario said he saw a hacksaw and a hookah hose, and immediately suspected that looting was taking place. He later discovered that the vessel's pipes, cables and portholes were missing.

He immediately reported the incident to the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority harbor patrol, but nothing has so far come out of it.

A month later, on July 11, the SBMA tourism department and the Philippine Coast Guard station in Subic town foiled another attempt to loot a sunken vessel off Baloy Beach in Barangay Barretto, Olongapo City.

An SBMA official said a small ship that looked like a Japanese landing craft, or what was left of it after previous lootings, was recently unearthed 15 meters inland in Sitio Minanga in Morong, Bataan.

Remnants of the ship were found on a beach-front property owned by an official of the Bataan Techno Park. The "scrap," which was found by workers clearing the area for a casino project, is now being cut to pieces to be sold to junk shops, the SBMA official said.

Another shipwreck

In another account three years ago, according to an SBMA document, Brian Homan, an Australian dive shop and restaurant owner at the freeport, brought several witnesses to an SBMA office to testify on a shipwreck looting incident. After an investigation, the SBMA cancelled the accreditation of the suspect, Belgian Johan Desadeleir, who owns a dive shop called Johan Adventure Diving in Barretto.

Desadeleir sued Homan for libel. Three months later, the SBMA brokered an agreement between the two foreigners: Desadeleir was to withdraw the case against Homan in exchange for the renewal of his accreditation. The suspect's accreditation was eventually renewed but the libel suit was not dropped.

The INQUIRER went to Desadeleir's shop on July 18 and 26 but failed to reach him for comments.

Still another diving enthusiast has accused the SBMA and Homan, who also operates a museum, of looting the USS Lanikai of its artifacts when it was found in 2003. The century-old wooden ship sank in the Nabasan Bay 59 years ago.

Dive shop owner Jim Robertson defended Homan, saying the latter "had [the] permission of the National Museum."

"They have been taking artifacts from the Lanikai, but apparently, they have the go-ahead from the SBMA and the National Museum. They brought up some artifacts but those are supposed to be displayed at his (Homan's) place," Robertson said.

"I think whatever they recovered, Homan was allowed to keep a portion or whatever [of the find]."

Collection

Dive master Earnest Elduayan agreed. "If you go to the National Museum, you will see his collection of jars—1500s, 1600s, Ming Dynasty, Tang Dynasty—everything is there. Homan donated those to the Philippines after he found them in Mindoro," Elduayan said.

Homan declined to be interviewed by the INQUIRER at length. But he said he felt abandoned by the SBMA when it renewed Desadeleir's accreditation.

"And this you can quote me—ankle weights, crowbars, hammer and chisels are not the ordinary tools of fun divers," he said, in a dig at someone whom he did not identify.

"Right or wrong, that is between Brian and Johan," Robertson said.

"I don't even think they are even suspects. If Brian is going to take something, he is going to take something whole. Whatever he has now is acquired through legal means," he added.

Despite their differences, rivalries and bickering, the dive shop owners agreed on two things: That still a larger part of the loot goes to junk shops, and the solution to the problem is simply law enforcement.

The bigger chunk of the looted items goes to junk shops, according to Horario.

"Souvenir lovers are not going to take a piece of anything. They want something whole, an artifact that they can make use of," Robertson said.

By their own estimate, divers said tons of metals were lost to small-time looters every year. If a kilogram of copper is being sold at local junk shops at P100, a ton of it a year would cost only P100,000.

Brass could fetch a higher price, Horario said.

"They might not be aware of it, but looters not only threaten to destroy the shipwrecks' historical value and Subic's marine life and tourism potential. They also risk even their own lives when they are not experienced in the proper way of diving and ascending in deep waters," Horario said.

Group pushes Masferre as national artist

CORDILLERA photographer Eduardo Masferre in a photo taken in 1988. COURTESY OF HOMEGROWNART.NET

By Desiree Caluza
Sagada, Mt. Province

A GROUP of professional photographers wants to recognize the late Cordillera photographer Eduardo Masferre as the country's first national artist for photography.

"I have always believed that Masferre worked hard as a photographer and documentor in the [Cordillera]. He deserved to be recognized as a national artist," Alex Baluyut, a Metro Manila-based professional photographer, said.

Baluyut started gathering signatures from friends and colleagues last year to start the campaign for Masferre's recognition as a national artist.

He said Masferre's collection of black and white photographs that captured the culture, tradition and everyday life of the Igorot people, starting from the 1930s, fascinated him.

"I could just imagine how he really worked hard to come up with those photographs [considering] that he was the only photographer in the Cordillera during that time when facilities were not accessible," he said.

Masferre, born to a Spanish father and a Kankanaey mother in 1909, died in 1995 at the age of 86. He was a self-taught photographer who documented the various tribes in the Cordillera through his lens.

He grew up in Sagada, Mt. Province and left for Spain to study when he was 5 years old. He returned to his hometown and worked with the American missionaries.

Former Mayor Bartolome Dao-as, Masferre's cousin, said the photographer learned how to develop films in his studio. Masferre used sunlight as enlarger when electricity was not available at that time, he said.

Masferre bought his first camera in 1933 by mail order from Kodak in the United States.

Interest in photography

His interest in photography started during his teenage years. While teaching at St. Mary's School in Sagada, he took photography as a hobby.

In a memorial Mass on Masferre's 10th death anniversary last month, Anglican priest Jerry Sagayo of the St. Mary's Church said Masferre was more Filipino and Sagadan than Spanish.

"He gave it all and was not selfish. He had a sense of agriculture and history. He did not want history books biased for Spain. He opted to stay in Sagada than continue to serve as a soldier in Spain," Sagayo said.

For Masferre's family, the effort to nominate him as a national artist was enough to honor his contribution to Philippine photography.

"We will be very happy if he is recognized as a national artist," said his wife Nena.

Baluyut said he was introduced to Masferre's work in the late 1970s when his brother, the late photographer Atanacio "Butch" Baluyut, met Masferre in his photo studio in Bontoc, Mt. Province, to ask him to exhibit his photographs.

Baluyut said Butch was so amazed with the photographs that he was convinced that Masferre should mount a one-man show at Butch's "Cx2 Gallery of Photography" in Ermita, Manila. "My brother's crusade was to support important works. [He wanted these to be shown to the public."

Qualified

On Feb. 4, 1982, Masferre mounted his first one-man show. Later, his photographs toured France, Denmark, Britain, the United States and Japan.

Photographer Wig Tysman, who attended Masferre's show in Manila, said Masferre made an in-depth documentary of the culture in the Cordillera villages because he was part of it.

Tysman said he believed Masferre was qualified to become a national artist.

Nena said when Masferre was starting to document life in the Cordillera villages, many did not want to cooperate. They thought he was a mining engineer because of his Caucasian features.

"But he spent time with the villagers. Eduardo would stay in the village for four days to get acquainted with the people," Nena said.

Pancho, one of Masferre's children, said one of his father's most unforgettable experiences was when a man from Dallic village in Bontoc drew out his bolo to threaten him if he took his picture.

"The man was afraid that his soul would be captured by the camera. Despite the threat, my father kept pointing the camera at the man," Pancho said.

From 1930 to 1950, Masferre went around Sagada and Bontoc towns and in Kalinga to document the tribes there.

"My father's photographs are very educational and these are very beneficial to the community. Now, the people are happy that the life and tradition of their parents and grandparents have been documented," Pancho said.

Charter change good, bad, says RP's only PM

From page A1

Various sectors, including former President Corazon Aquino and business groups, have called on her to step down.

In her State of the Nation Address on Monday, Ms Arroyo said she favored Charter change via the constituent assembly and announced her preference for a parliamentary-federal form of government.

Under a parliamentary system, the prime minister is not directly elected by the people but is chosen by the majority party in the legislature. A major requirement of a parliamentary system is a mature political party system in which a political party is differentiated from the others by its platform.

Virata became the country's prime minister in 1981-1986 when the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos experimented with the French model—a parliamentary form of government with a strong president.

Virata, now president of the Bankers Association of the Philippines and vice chair of Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., said he had been in favor of a parliamentary form of government since the 1960s.

"The good thing about the parliamentary system is that the executive and legislative work together. It's like a company where your board and management are together and can be more effective," he said.

Greater accountability

"The other thing is the accountability is greater because it's a party responsibility. There can be a vote of no confidence and you're out constitutionally," he said.

But he is not in favor of a federal system under a parliamentary form of government.

"What I am very concerned about is the increase in expenses because each unit in a federal system would have its legislature, its own Supreme Court. I don't know what would be the outcome of that," Virata said.

Unlike Virata, Jesus Arranza, president of the Federation of Philippine Industries, favors a federal system of government.

Arranza said the seat of government was so centralized in Metro Manila.

"We need to bring changes to the countryside since (people there) know what areas to focus on," Arranza said. "The present bicameral system takes too long to make laws that would address our problems."

Raul Concepcion, CEO of Concepcion Industries, supports a shift to a parliamentary system only in 2010, or when Ms Arroyo shall have completed his six-year term.

He also wants the people, who will make amendments to the 1987 Constitution, to be elected just for that purpose.

As proposed by the President, the current members of the House of Representatives and Senate will convene into a constituent assembly to amend the Constitution.

In contrast, delegates to a constitutional convention are elected to amend the Charter.

Concepcion said those who would be tasked with amending the Constitution should be elected during the May 2007 national elections.

He said the May 2010 elections would decide on who would be the members of parliament.

"We hope it would be a parliamentary system as our country is too small for federal system," he said.

Vehicle for unity

Sergio Ortiz-Luis, Philippine Exporters Confederation Inc. president, said the President's move to fast-track Charter change could be the "vehicle for unity" that would douse the political crisis strangling the economy.

"At the end of the day, the opposition will have a problem because some of its members might feel that this is a better way to accomplish what they want since the President has implied she might cut her term," he said.

For his part, Miguel Varela, Employers Confederation of the Philippines chair, said the public should give Ms Arroyo a chance to prove her worth with the least political distraction after she declared her commitment to fiscal reform and openness to Charter change.

Philippine Business Conference chair George Siy said he was hopeful that "real reforms would take place" following the President's very spirited Sona.

"There is no choice but to implement the economic reforms because without them we will continue to lose the interest of foreign investors," said Siy.

Donald Dee, president of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said that what struck him most was not the President's commitment to pursue fiscal reforms whatever the political cost.

"She declared that she will accept changes for the sake of unity and that to me is the ultimate sacrifice," Dee said. "By accepting that Charter change is the way to go, her six-year term becomes a big question mark and she has accepted that."

Disappointed

But some in the business community have expressed disappointment and doubt over Ms Arroyo's Sona.

The stock market was also only slightly higher yesterday, up 5.18 points to 1959.58, hardly stirred by Ms Arroyo's statement that the economy was poised for a takeoff.

"I don't know what she meant by that. The economy is stable but I don't see a takeoff per se. Our forecast in the next five years is a modest growth for the Philippine economy at between 5 to 5.5 percent. This year is a slower year at 4.7 percent," Peter Wallace, president of think tank Wallace Business Forum, said following a press conference of the Management Association of the Philippines.

Wallace said a 5-percent growth in the gross domestic product (GDP) was not impressive because this would put the Philippines at the bottom of other Asian economies.

"I can't see the takeoff in that. The economy is stable. That is good but she hasn't said what would give us that takeoff," he said.

Wallace said that what would boost the economy starting next year was the bustling activity in the information technology and telecommunications sectors.

The Makati Business Club, which has called on Ms Arroyo to step down, expressed disappointment that the President had kept quiet on the leadership issue.

The group said Ms Arroyo had lost the ability to lead effectively.

With a report from Elizabeth L. Sanchez

'Character change first before Charter change'

THE ALLIANCE for the Common Good, or Ang Kapatiran, a platform-based national political party, has reiterated its opposition to Charter change.

"Charter change at this time must be preceded by character change," says party president Nandy Pacheco. "Heaven will not fall if the Charter is not changed immediately, but it might if we, the people, do not change and reform our ways."

Pacheco says it is important for the people to be given an opportunity to undergo character building, values formation and basic political education. The people must also be given a chance to answer the following questions: What are we now? What do we want to become? How can we pass from our present situation to the condition that we desire to reach?

This is what KPK (Kapatiran sa Pangkalahatang Kabutihan) a communitarian, interfaith, nonviolent political movement for the common good, is doing. The KPK president is Johnny Cardenas.

With the total breakdown of moral leadership and the fiscal crisis that the country is facing, not to mention widespread violence and diminished respect for human life, there are several factors that militate against Charter change, Pacheco says.

They include: lack of people's confidence in our political leaders; public perception that those pushing for Charter amendments want to perpetuate themselves in power; change at this time can spark endless, acrimonious debate and lead to further disunity among the people; and the enormous costs involved.

Oil Palm: The Next Mindanao Gold Rush

ABERDI President Robertino E. Pizarro (right) and Malaysian oil palm consultant Ismail bin Ahmad examine the healthy first fruiting of an oil palm plant (Elaeis guineensis) in one of the company's farms in Bukidnon. A fully-grown plant has 10-12 bunches. A ready-to-harvest bunch weighs around 25 kilos.

You spend an average of P25,000.00 per hectare per year for the first three years and on the start of the fourth year start harvesting, modestly recouping your investment, until the sixth year, when you start really hitting it big: P60,000.00/ha/year for 25 years!

If you like the arithmetic and you have a couple of hectares of idle land in Bukidnon and the areas around, you may want to call ABERDI right now (A Brown Energy & Resource Development, Inc. in Cagayan de Oro City, phone number (63) (88) 8588580 and Cell No. 09209616121 look for Operations Manager Engr. Fernando S. Mercurio).

The cash crop is oil palm, the fruit of which when processed becomes palm oil, a basic ingredient in soap, cosmetics, ointments, vitamins, candles, plastic, oleo-chemical applications, and many others, aside from being used in cooking and baking.

It doesn't matter whether you're a seasoned Bukidnon farmer or a Makati stockbroker- all you need is a piece of land in and around Bukidnon. With ABERDI to provide the seedlings, technical assistance, and even the management of your farm, and Quedancor to provide the Modified SRT Financing Program for those who need financing, you're in.

What to do with your harvest? Well, ABERDI- which plans to put up a palm oil mill in Bukidnon - will buy all you can produce. Or, you may wish to have it milled elsewhere, as in Agusan, which also has a palm oil mill plant.

The domestic market for palm oil is estimated to be P2 billion annually and grows at 10% per year. About 75% of this local requirement has to be imported, there being not enough local production to meet demand.

Oil palm grows well in Bukidnon, where by herself has an estimated 100,000 hectares of untilled land.

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Middle class sees 'third way' to fix RP's woes

From page A1

shot at college. The student chose to do what was right.

Still another sign that the gathering was not organized by workers or the urban poor was the sound system. The music that came from the sound boxes was clear and crisp. Militant groups, in contrast, usually use megaphones that squeak in their rallies.

Two weeks ago, only a handful stayed with running-priest Fr. Robert Reyes, who set up a tent at the monument.

Spurned by the decision of the bishops not to call for the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo, Reyes decided to hold a hunger strike on Edsa.

Flowers and candles

He called on people to offer prayers and bring flowers and candles to the monument. Maybe prayers will convince Malacañang's occupant to resign, he said.

Support for Reyes' views has been gaining ground, albeit slowly, during the past few days. On Sunday, his 15th day surviving on water and fruit juices, more people heard him say Mass and stayed well into the night compared with the Sunday before.

But while they ask Ms Arroyo to relinquish her post, the people at the monument do not want to seize power for themselves.

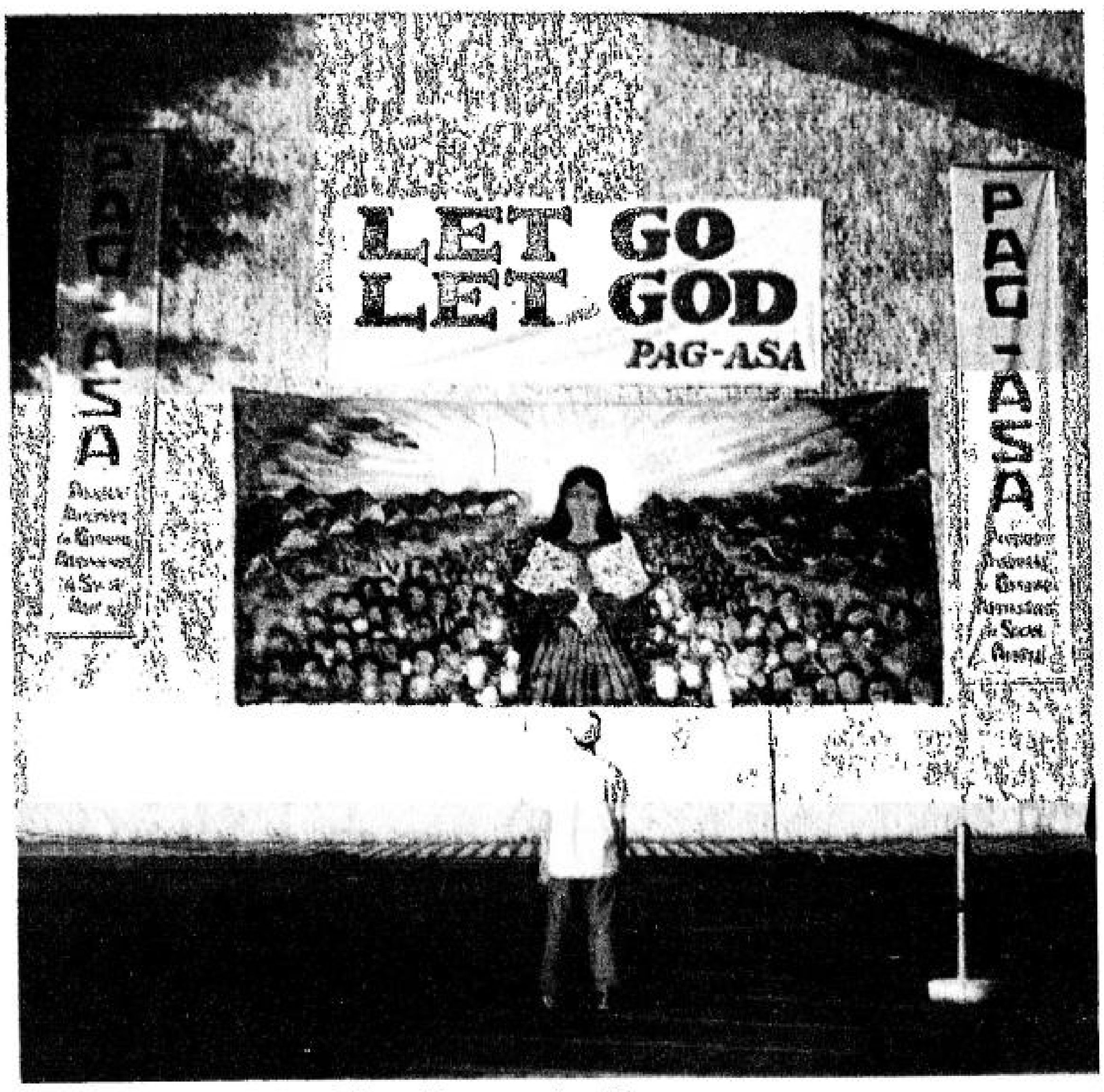
That was what one of the things that went wrong after Edsa I and Edsa II, according to Nicanor Perlas, a convenor of Pag-asa, a group of mostly middle-class families seeking to start a cultural revolution in the country.

"What went wrong after Edsa II was that civil society, instead of staying as a critic of government, joined the government. Now the people have no alternative, and that is why they have not taken to the streets," he said.

Beneficiaries of revolution

What Perlas, a co-winner in 2003 of Sweden's Right Livelihood Awards, known as the "alternative Nobels," was saying that today's revolutionaries must not be the beneficiaries of their revolution.

When they do, they more or less prove to be no better than the ones they have put to retirement.



A MAN meditates at the People Power Monument along Edsa. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

That was what happened to the civil society that helped put Ms Arroyo in power. A few of its leaders, including Dinky Soliman, later became a powerful bloc in the Arroyo administration. Apparently frustrated and unable to effect change from within, Soliman resigned on July 8 as social welfare secretary.

Speeches

Perlas, a member of the coalition of civil society groups that helped overthrow President Joseph Estrada in 2001, said he was offered a Cabinet post by the Arroyo administration two years ago. He turned it down.

On Sunday, the eve of Ms Arroyo's State of the Nation Address (Sona), Perlas, Reyes and some 200 others converged at the monument.

In between speeches, the multi-awarded singer and songwriter Bayang Barrios, the Madrigal Singers and the UP-based Kontra-Gapi entertained the crowd.

Among those who spoke were former Pangasinan Gov. Oscar Orbos, "jueteng" whistle blowers Sandra Cam and Wilfredo "Boy" Mayor, Armin Luistro of the La Salle Brothers, environmentalist Fr. Raul "Puti" Fernandez, and actor Pen Medina.

Wearing a shirt with a huge "resign" mark, Medina bravely met with the pro-Arroyo rallyists on Commonwealth Avenue during the Sona to "feel their pulse." He talked to some of the protesters, telling them the ills of the country and why it was wrong to be rooting for Ms Arroyo.

For Orbos, the ills of the country are acute. Leaders cannot rise beyond themselves and have no sense of sacrifice, according to him. People lack spirituality. That is why the seeds of Edsa never took root, he said.

Take the illegal numbers game "jueteng," he said.

"If jueteng is wrong, and we cannot stop it, what can we stop?" he said. "If the government cannot solve it, what can it solve?"

Capacity to sacrifice

Taking a swipe at Ms Arroyo, Orbos remarked: "Only if we have the capacity to sacrifice for others that democracy will work."

Ms Arroyo has been repeatedly asked, some by the most influential persons in the country like former President Corazon Aquino, to "make the ultimate sacrifice" by resigning.

Forced to defend the call of the De La Salle University for Ms Arroyo to step down, Brother Luistro, president of the De La Salle system, said neither he nor other teachers like him could tolerate cheating.

He was referring to the taped conversations between Ms Arroyo and an election official in which she allegedly ordered the rigging of the presidential election last year. The President apologized for what she called a "lapse in judgment" when she called the election official but did not admit that she cheated.

Higher standard

A "simple sorry" won't suffice to correct it, he said. "If a student is caught cheating, (I will tell him) it is better to fail than to get a good mark through cheating," Luistro said, adding that a student must also accept the penalty for his act.

Yet an even higher standard must be applied to a leader of nations, like Ms Arroyo, he added.

Luistro said that was why La Salle publicly called on the President to step down. "If a teacher in charge of molding the future of 40 students cannot afford to be the subject of gossip and expect to retain his or her credibility, how much more someone who is in charge of the future of millions?" he asked.

Explaining the school's decision, Luistro said: "Our mission in the school is not just to help students prepare for the future, it is also to make sure that there (will be a) future for them."

To do otherwise would be to betray the very essence of teaching, he said.

The people at the monument do not have any love lost for Ms Arroyo. Reacting to her Sona, Perlas said it was a "mixture of motherhood statements, half-truths and outright fictitious claims."

Out of sync

Yet not only Ms Arroyo was out of sync with the real state of the nation, so were the people who populated Congress that day, he said.

"She has instead diverted the issue to Cha-cha (Charter change)," he said.

Yet people, no matter how angry they are at the way Ms Arroyo is running the country, have learned their lessons and will not be convinced by traditional politicians to join them on streets, the group said.

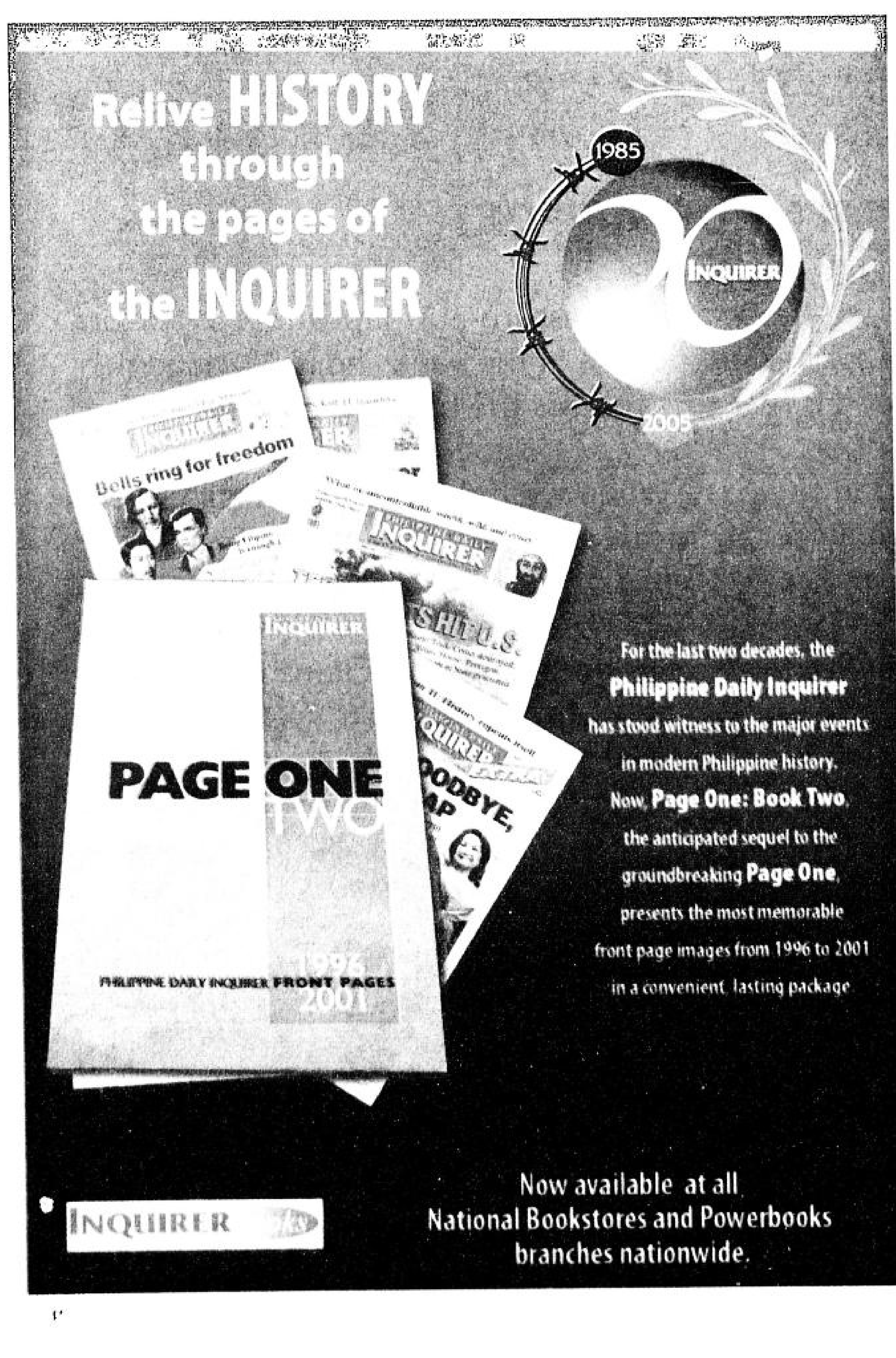
Reyes had put it more bluntly last week. "Those now calling for Ms Arroyo's ouster have no credibility. That is why people will not follow them."

"People are now thinking," Perlas said. "They see that after Edsa I and II, nothing happened. They see that if we were just to change faces, nothing would happen."

So the group seeks a miracle to effect change through spirituality and self-sacrifice, through prayers and flowers.

From afar, the crowd pales compared with the thousands who have been demanding Ms Arroyo's resignation on the capital's streets.

But that people continue to flock to the monument to sit and to listen is proof that there is hope and that this country can change, according to organizers of the gathering.



Relive HISTORY through the pages of the INQUIRER

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Nora's lawyers rejoice: US cop ...

From page A1

and of his right to have an attorney present during questioning.

Edelberg, who cross-examined Didier, said: "I think the airport police officer was either not very smart or very inexperienced. Claire (Espina, his co-counsel) and I caught him."

Didier has been in the service for only four months.

Teary-eyed

A tense and teary-eyed Aunor had turned up for the hearing at the Airport Courthouse, with Superior Court Judge Joseph Shino Biderman presiding.

Dressed casually in a gray top and white pants, the Filipino singer-actress appeared agitated throughout the proceedings, unlike last April when she was relaxed, almost calm, as she pleaded not guilty during her arraignment.

"It is OK to feel nervous," Edelberg was heard assuring his client.

Aunor went for a smoke several times while the court waited for a Tagalog interpreter. The wait delayed the hearing, scheduled at 8:30 a.m., for almost three hours. Zenaides "Zen" Lao, a state-certified Filipino interpreter, said his car had broken down.

The usual gathering of the singer's admirers was missing. During the arraignment, all of Aunor's fan clubs across the United States had sent representatives. On Monday, apart from the INQUIRER, there was only a handful of reporters from the Associated Press, ABS-CBN, GMA and Philippine News.

Aside from Didier, opposing counsel Margaret Rizzo presented two other witnesses: Transportation Security Airport's (TSA) lead screener Dana Hoff and LAPD (Los Angeles Police Department) officer Rudy Villareal, the first policeman contacted by Hoff. Didier recorded the incriminating items found by Hoff on Aunor.

The singer's next court date was set for Aug. 8. She is scheduled to re-enter her plea of not guilty, according to her lawyers. Meanwhile, she is free on a $10,000 bail.

Asked if he thought the case would go on trial, Edelberg replied: "It is too early to make a prediction [but] the security officer's testimony ... contained many inconsistencies. Going to trial on a case like this can be dangerous; working a settlement could only be to the satisfaction of our client."

'Very traumatic'

Aunor smiled reluctantly when asked how she felt. She told the press in Tagalog: "It's difficult. It's very traumatic."

Lourdes Tancinco, Aunor's immigration lawyer, said her client was busy with singing engagements in the United States. Aunor recently appeared in ABS-CBN's "Kapamilya Summer Caravan sa Amerika" at the Rose Bowl Stadium in Pasadena and the Monster Park in South San Francisco.

Although she retains Philippine citizenship, Aunor has spent much of her time in recent years at her home in Linda Vista, north of San Diego. *With a report from AP*

NORA Aunor listens to her lawyer, Sherwin C. Edelberg, at the Los Angeles Airport branch courthouse Monday. AP

IN THE KNOW

The Miranda Doctrine

"YOU have the right to remain silent. If you give up that right, anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to an attorney and to have an attorney present during questioning. . ."

This is the Miranda warnings that US policemen read to a criminal suspect, a familiar scene in American television programs and movies. The warning is mandated as a means of protecting a criminal suspect's right against coerced self-incrimination. The suspect's rights are called Miranda rights and the 1966 US Supreme Court ruling in the case of Miranda v. Arizona which mandated these warnings is called the Rule of Miranda.

The high court ruling stemmed from a criminal case involving Ernesto Miranda who was arrested in 1963 for robbery, kidnapping, and rape. During police interrogation, Miranda confessed. During trial, his confession was the only evidence offered by prosecutors and Miranda was convicted of rape and kidnapping and sentenced to 20 to 30 years on both charges.

US Chief Justice Earl Warren, who delivered the opinion of the high court, said that Miranda was intimidated by the interrogation, and that he did not understand his right against self-incrimination or his right to counsel. Because of this, the high court overturned Miranda's conviction. In a new trial, however, Miranda was convicted after prosecutors presented witnesses and other evidence against him. He was sentenced to 11 years. Paroled in 1972, Miranda was killed in a barroom brawl four years later. Ironically, his assailant was "Mirandized" but was released when he invoked his right to remain silent.

The Miranda principle on the rights of a suspect from forced self-incrimination during police interrogation is enshrined in the 1987 Philippine Constitution's Bill of Rights (Article III, Sec. 12).

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Kidnap raps vs 7 BI workers

By Tina G. Santos

THE JUSTICE Department yesterday filed a complaint against seven employees of the Bureau of Immigration (BI) for allegedly kidnapping two Taiwanese businessmen last month.

Charged with kidnapping for ransom in the Manila Regional Trial Court were Amando Talatala, Arsenio Cantada, Nasser Hadjiwahid and Andman Mangondato, all intelligence agents; Robespierre Caparas and Linda Ong, confidential "assets"; and Mario Mejico, a utility worker of the bureau.

Except for Hadjiwahid and Mangondato, who remain at large, the rest are now detained at the Police Anti-Crime Emergency Response (PACER) detention cell in Camp Crame.

Kidnapped in Subic

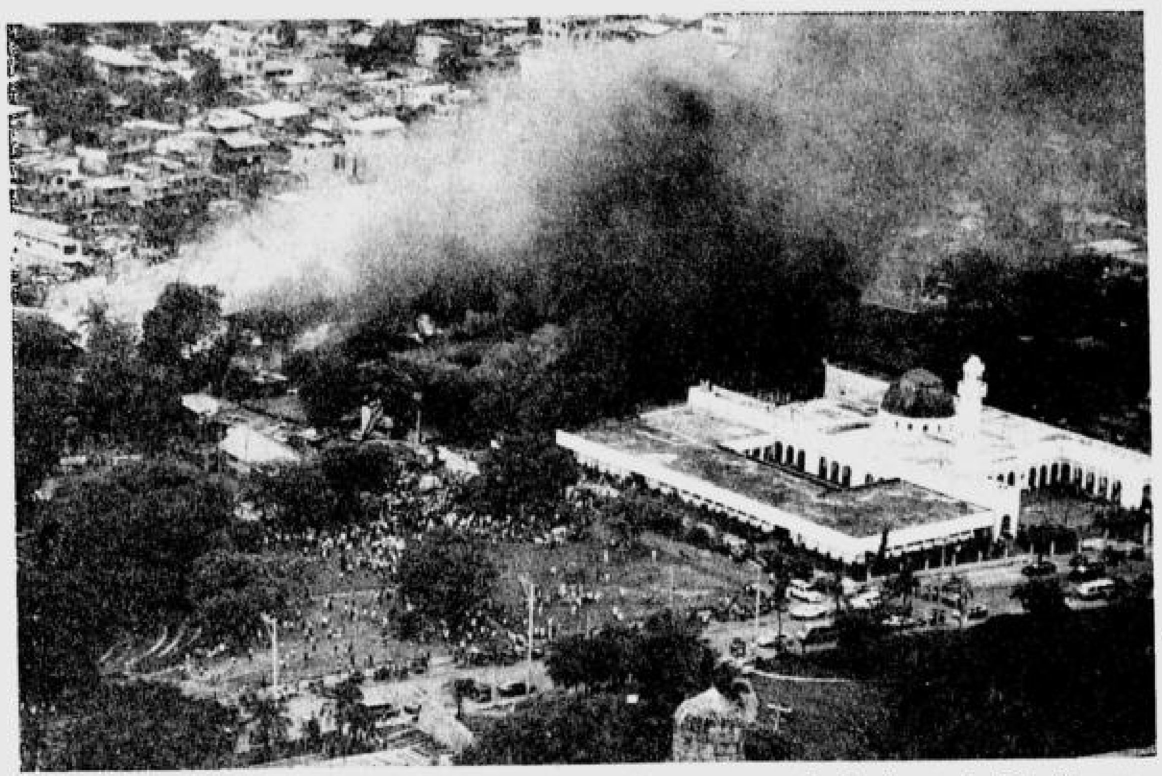
The respondents were accused of abducting brothers Rong Yun Chen and Yung Yuan Chen, both Taiwanese tourists temporarily residing in Iba, Zambales. The two were kidnapped around 8:30 p.m. on June 5 in front of the Legenda Casino Filipino in Subic Bay, Zambales.

In their affidavits, the victims claimed they had left the casino when the suspects alighted from three vehicles and shoved them at gunpoint inside separate cars headed to Manila and Pasay City. The suspects allegedly demanded $30,000 in exchange for the victims' release.

Authorities later rescued Rong Yun and arrested Talatala, Caparas, Obando, Ong and Cantada. Hadjiwahid and Mangondato managed to escape, but were forced to release Yun Yuan in front of a Pasay bus terminal.

The suspects denied they kidnapped the victims, and said they had a mission order (MO) to arrest Rong Yun. However, an investigation showed that the MO was unnumbered and undated.

Woman charged in bar shooting



THE FIRE that hit Maharlika Village in Taguig City yesterday came precariously close to the Blue Mosque as seen from the Huey II helicopter sent by the Air Force to help fight the blaze. The Huey II was piloted by Capt. Noel Plotado and Capt. Fernando Monoso Jr.

ROGER MARGALLO

Taguig fire: Help came from above

By Jocelyn R. Uy and Nikko Dizon

A HEAVY downpour and water dumped from an Air Force helicopter helped prevent the fire that broke out in Maharlika Village, Taguig City, yesterday from doing more damage.

"If it had not rained, the remaining shanties could have been wiped out," said Erlinda Pangandaman, Maharlika Village barangay chair in a phone interview.

The fire broke out at 11:15 a.m. in one of the bunkhouses in an area called Quiapo Dos.

It quickly spread and destroyed a four-story tenement, called Bahay Pagkakaisa, which housed around 400 families, said Pangandaman.

The building used to be a dormitory that housed scholars from Mindanao during the Martial Law years, the barangay chair said.

The dormitory became the home of families relocated from Quiapo, Manila, during the term of Mayor Alfredo Lim, she added.

Pangandaman said the fire started in either Bunkhouse 9 or 10 on Cagayan De Oro Street, which was just on the left side of the four-story apartment.

An unattended gas stove might have caused the blaze, she said.

Pangandaman expressed relief that the Blue Mosque, which was about 20 meters from the fire scene, was left unscathed.

She said the heavy rain that fell at about noon prevented the fire from spreading.

An Air Force Huey II, an upgraded and modernized version of the original UH-1H helicopter, also dumped hundreds of liters of water onto the burning structures.

The Huey II from the 505th Search and Rescue Team was equipped with a "bambi bucket," which can hold as much as six drums of water. A drum can hold 208 liters of water.

In all, the helicopter completed eight trips for the mission, said Capt. Joselito Munar of the Air Force public information service.

When the blaze was put out at 1:15 p.m., between 500 to 700 families had been rendered homeless, said Pangandaman.

The bunkhouses accommodated at least 100 families, she said.

The fire reached Task Force Bravo, fire investigators said.

Damage, as estimated by the barangay captain, was around P500,000.

As of press time, the affected families were scattered near the mosque.

Pangandaman said covered courts in the barangay would be used as temporary shelters.

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation (NBI) yesterday charged a woman in the killing of a television director last month.

Charito Angeles, a diamond dealer, was charged as an accomplice in the fatal shooting of ABS-CBN director Louis Santiago last month.

"(Angeles) was given many chances to appear at the NBI to shed light on the case, but she failed to do so," NBI National Capital Region chief Edmund Arugay said.

Angeles, of 34 Cambridge St., Hillsborough Subdivision, Alabang, Muntinlupa City, is reportedly in the United States, where she flew after the shooting.

Arugay said Angeles was charged based on the testimony of confessed gunman Oliver Jameiro.

'Gun came from her'

Jameiro had said Angeles handed him the gun which he used in shooting into a crowd in the midst of a brawl outside Venezia Bar (V-Bar) at Ayala Center, Makati City, at about 4:30 a.m. on June 8.

Santiago was shot to death while six others, including a policeman, were wounded.

Special Investigator Albert Gaerlan of the NBI Background Investigation Division said two witnesses had testified to seeing Angeles at the crime scene.

"Her (Angeles) flight to the United States could be an indication of guilt," Arugay said.

The NBI-NCR chief said Jameiro and Angeles left for Singapore on the day of the crime.

Arugay said they were looking into the possibility that Angeles used a different name because it did not appear in the flight manifest.

Jameiro's seatmate

"We are now checking who Jameiro's seatmate on the plane was," Arugay added.

The NBI official said that after spending four days in Singapore Angeles proceeded to the US while Jameiro returned to the Philippines a week later.

Arugay said they would also charge Angeles as an accomplice in the wounding of six other victims.

Arugay also said there was no proof that alleged gun owner Marine Major Robert Velasco participated in the crime.

"It appears that he has no criminal liability because of the absence of evidence that he was present at the crime scene or involved in the fray," Arugay said.

The NBI forwarded its report to the Navy for a possible administrative charge against Velasco.

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FACTORY OUTLET

LTFRB OKs fare hike for airport taxis, but...

By Clarissa S. Batino

ALMOST — but not quite.

Airport taxis were given the go-ahead by the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) to raise their fares, but only for trips that would exceed 30 km.

For the first 30 km, airport taxis were ordered to maintain their fares at P21 for every kilometer. From the next 30 to 100 kilometers, coupon taxi fares can charge P44; P22 for every 2.5 kilometers covered. After 100 kilometers, airport taxis can increase their fares to P25 per km., according to the order issued by the LTFRB yesterday but signed last July 21.

The new fare scheme for taxis operating at the terminals of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport will take effect 15 days from publication in a national daily.

LTFRB Chair Maria Elena Bautista said this was the only fare increase petition pending with the board. The transport regulator had approved fare increases for jeeps, regular metro buses, air-conditioned metro buses and provincial non-aircon buses.

Nissan Car Lease Philippines Inc., the operator of NAIA taxis, sought an increase of P33 for every kilometer. The group first petitioned a P31 per km. hike in 2003, but the request did not prosper. The taxi operator said it had been servicing the NAIA 24 hours a day, and its customers were mostly well-off.

Nissan justified the increase, claiming its cabs provided passenger safety and comfort. Last year, a new petition was filed but the hearings were reset several times.

In May this year, the hearings were almost concluded but the Office of the Solicitor General still opposed the group's petition.

The LTFRB justified its decision to grant a "reasonable adjustment" to airport taxis because of increased operating costs of transport groups.

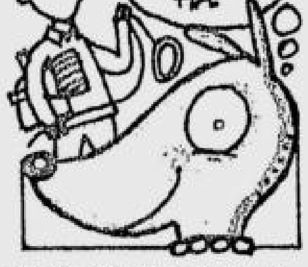
METROBRIEFS

No malice meant - Cristy on Hero articles

FACING libel charges from a fellow ABS-CBN talent, gossip columnist Cristy Fermin insisted that she was just trying to help and the articles she wrote were written in good faith. "My articles were not malicious. I have no ill feelings toward Hero and Henry (Angeles). I consider them my brothers who need advice," Fermin said in her counter-affidavit written in Filipino and filed in the Pasig City Prosecutor's Office last week. Fermin is facing 27 counts of libel for articles she wrote in her columns against Hero, a young actor, and his brother-manager Henry. Added Fermin: "I did not violate any rules in journalism. I just believe in freedom of expression." *Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*

'Doggie bags' required in this barangay

DON'T forget to bring a bag for your pet's poop while walking your dog in this barangay. And remember to walk on the left side of the street. These are just two of the guidelines dog owners must follow in Barangay Blue Ridge A , Quezon City. The ordinance introduced by Kagawad Rosie Ballaret also provides that dogs should be collared or leashed. Violators will be fined P200 for the 1st offense, and P300 for subsequent offenses. The ordinance takes effect once it is approved by the city council. *DJ Yap*


PARANG SA STATES HA!

Banawe envisioned to be QC's Chinatown

Quezon City may soon have its own version of 'Chinatown.' But instead of shops selling 'tikoy,' herbs, and delicacies, it will feature automotive stores, restaurants and banks. Councilor Bernadette Herrera-Dy has proposed a resolution declaring Banawe Street as the 'Chinatown of QC,' because of the flourishing businesses of Fil-Chinese families in the area. Bryan Asiatico, a member of Herrera's staff, said the proposal was intended to encourage the development of Banawe Street through beautification projects intended to make the area more attractive to motorists, pedestrians, and businessmen *DJ Yap*

Police receive free telephone caller ID device

By Nancy C. Carvajal

TO HELP curb criminality, a foundation is donating "enhanced caller ID" equipment to the different police districts in Metro Manila.

In a letter from the Foundation for Crime Prevention (FCP) to the Northern Police District director Supt. Raul Gonzales, Executive Director Celerina R. Amores said the donation was the foundation's way of helping law enforcers fight criminality, particularly those perpetrated by so-called Dugo-dugo gangs.

Dugo-dugo (literally "Blood-blood") is a phone scam where a con artist usually tricks a househelp into handing over her employer's cash and valuables.

FCP members include Manuel V. Pangilinan, chair of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company, former Secretary of Finance Jose Pardo and former Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura.

The caller ID equipment, Amores said, costs P1,700 each.

The subscription fee for the first three months would be waived after which a P99 monthly fee will be charged to the district's phone bill.

The enhanced caller ID equipment will have built-in text pads, phonebook systems, caller waiting, speed calling, caller ID and call forwarding features.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER • PLATINUM ANNIVERSARY 1985 20

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Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres

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RP-SMB dribblers crush Indians

TAIPEI, Taiwan—RP-SAN MIGUEL Beer bucked a slow start to whip India, 107-69, Tuesday night and cruise to its fourth win in a row in the 27th R. William Jones Cup International Basketball Tournament at the Taipei Physical Education College gym.

With an unblemished 4-0 slate, the Filipinos shared the lead in the 10-team field with USA-Passing Lane Sports and Russia-Samara.

The 38-point spread, however, failed to reflect the anxious moments RP-SMB went through in the first half.

With Shanmugam Sridhar on the firing end, India dictated the tempo in the first period, and had the Filipinos trailing, 14-22 early and 19-24 at the end of the first quarter.

"I admit I made a mistake by telling the guys that India will be a light opponent," said national coach Chot Reyes, who played only eight men for most of the game.

"We came out quite flat and India took advantage. Any team in this tournament is capable of beating any team on a given night. It's good we realized that in the second half and got our game going."

Jayjay Helterbrand broke down the Indians' defenses at the start of the second period, repeatedly slashing the lane as the Filipinos stepped on the gas. A twinner by the Barangay Ginebra spitfire at 8:45 in the second quarter finally gave RP-SMB the lead for good, 25-24.

Asi Taulava, who led all scorers with 29 big points, also started flexing his muscles underneath and overwhelming the much lighter Indians. But India seemed determined to put up a fight, hit-

RP-SMB/ A26

ON A ROLL: Jayjay Helterbrand keeps the RP backcourt sharp against the Indian five.

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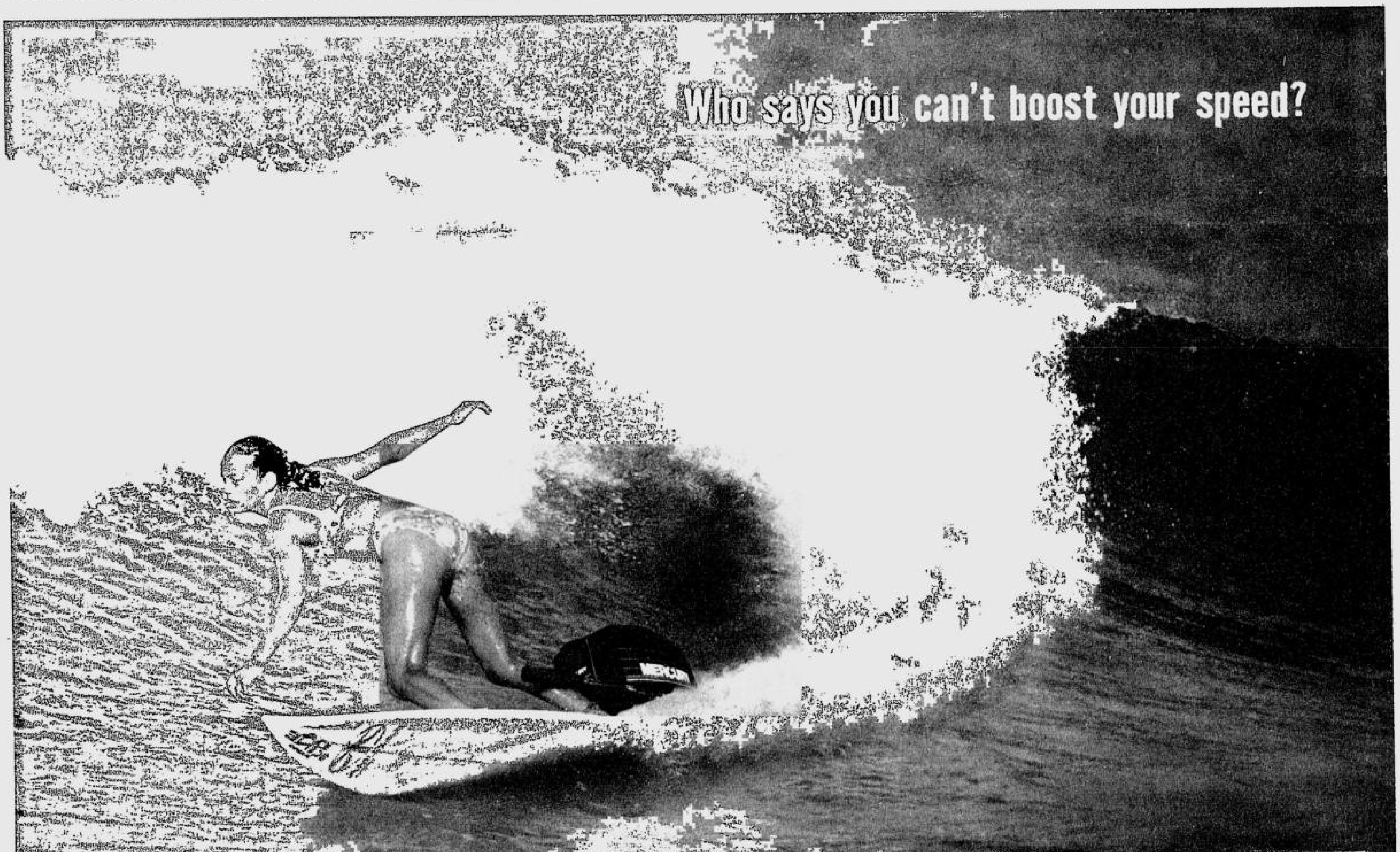
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San Beda fires Racela; PCU, Letran break tie

GABRIEL Espinas (left) of Philippine Christian U battles Carlo Manding (middle) and Ernie Jay Sagad of St. Benilde for the rebound. Espinas will again be a marked man against Letran today. JESS YUSON

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE SAN BEDA Lions yesterday fired coach Nash Racela for failing to make things happen for the Mendiola squad in a dismal first round in the NCAA basketball tournament.

Racela claimed just one win in seven games with his rookie-laden lineup as the Lions kept the Jose Rizal U Bombers company at the basement.

It was Racela, though, who led the once-proud Lions to their first Final Four appearance in seven years last season.

"They wanted us (coaching staff) to tender a courtesy resignation but we didn't agree," said Racela. "All the while, we've been telling the players not to give up. We were very positive going into the second round. If we resign, we're sending the wrong message.So we told them to just fire us."

"They didn't even look at the details," added Racela. "We have a young team and these are the rebuilding years."

Former Far Eastern U coach Koy Banal was offered to take over the Lions' bench next week, but has not reportedly made a decision.

Meanwhile, defending champions Philippine Christian U Dolphins and the Letran Knights collide at the Cuneta Astrodome today to break their tie at the top of the eight-team field.

The Dolphins and the Knights, both strong enough to sweep the first round with unblemished 6-0 slates, clash in the featured 2 p.m. game.

The Mapua Cardinals battle the St. Benilde Blazers at 4 p.m.

Coach Junel Baculi said his Dolphins do not have a clear advantage against the Knights, even though PCU will take to the floor slightly favored over the multi-titled Intramuros crew.

"It's important to get the upperhand (after the first round)," said Baculi. "Both teams are equally talented. It's a matter of who comes prepared."

The Dolphins kept their pristine record last Wednesday by blasting the Blazers, 63-49, as Gabby Espinas continued to impress with another explosive performance. Last year's MVP and Rookie of the Year came away with 18 points, 17 rebounds and two blocks.

Thus, the game plan is quite clear for Knights coach Louie Alas. "We have to stop their main men, especially Espinas," said Alas.

The Knights have also shown their firepower with three key players averaging in double figures —Jonathan Aldave (12.7 points per game), Aaron Aban (11.7 ppg) and JP Alcaraz (11.5 ppg).

The Cardinals and the Blazers, in contrast, are hoping to recover from recent skids.

STANDINGS	W	L
PCU	6	0
Letran	6	0
Mapua	4	2
Benilde	3	3
SSC	3	4
Perpetual	2	5
San Beda	1	6
JRU	1	6

GAMES TODAY
(Cuneta Astrodome)
11:30 a.m.—PCU vs Letran (Jrs)
2 p.m.—PCU vs Letran (Srs)
4 p.m.—Mapua vs St. Benilde

RP-SMB dribblers crush Indians for fourth win in Jones Cup

From page A25

ting from the perimeter and getting to within 43-41 early in the third period.

But it was all downhill for the Indians after that. The Filipinos again took the ball down low with Taulava, Romel Adducul and Tony de la Cruz taking turns at the basket. A 15-0 blast transformed a shaky 57-48 lead to a 72-48 bubble late in the third quarter.

The Filipinos went on a late tear while holding India to a single field goal in the last four minutes of play. Taulava and Adducul combined for all of RP-SMB's 15 points to set the final margin.

Brandon Cablay limped off the court early in the second period after bruising his knee and may be a doubtful starter when the Filipinos take on AIS of Australia at 4 p.m. Wednesday.

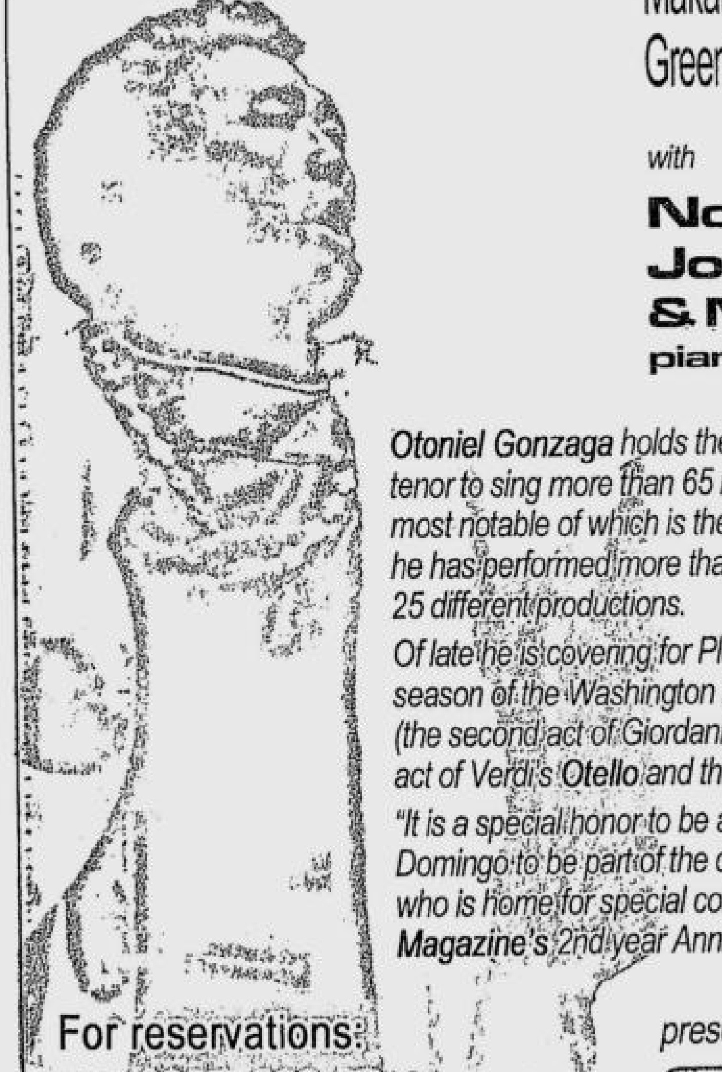
But the welcome development for Reyes is the arrival of PBL standouts Dennis Miranda and Jondan Salvador in time for the game against the Australians. The two failed to join the team early due to snags in the release of their visas.

The scores:

RP-SMB 107—Taulava 29, Adducul 18, Helterbrand 17, Hontiveros 11, de la Cruz 10, Williams 10, Raymundo 7, de Ocampo 5, Cablay 0.

India 69—Sridhar 24, Singh T. 13, Ahmed 12, Singh J. 11, Riyazzudin 6, Singh Y. 2, Raj 1, Pandey 0, Pal 0, Rai 0, Krishna 0.

Quarters: 19-24, 42-37, 72-51, 107-69



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*Otoniel Gonzaga holds the record of being the only Filipino tenor to sing more than 65 roles including classical operettas–the most notable of which is the role of **Prince Sou Chong** which he has performed more than 500 times and in more than 25 different productions.*

*Of late he is covering for Placido Domingo in the triple bill opening season of the Washington D.C.-based National Opera (the second act of Giordani's **Fedora** with Mirelia Freni, the final act of Verdi's **Otello** and the final act of Lehar's **The Merry Widow**).*

*"It is a special honor to be asked by a great artist like Placido Domingo to be part of the opera house he leads," says Gonzaga who is home for special concert at Ayala Museum for **Prime Asia Magazine's** 2nd year Anniversary Celebration.*

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Welcome to the GMA-JDV Olympics

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

THE TRUE state of the nation? It was the size of fear by sinful leaders who saw it fit to prevent the circulation of the special Sona issue of hard-hitting Pinoy Weekly.

Copies of the newspaper, that portrayed the hunger and anger of the *masa*, were confiscated by the police around the Batasan area on Monday, hours before President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo spoke and again failed to deliver an honest message to the nation.

The instant clamp on Pinoy Weekly, its editors texted the INQUIRER on Monday, was a shameless trampling of truth.

Pinoy Weekly editor Rogelio Ordoñez of Cavite, a literature professor at the PUP, declared the newspaper has been critical of "the rotten status quo, etc."

He said it's been in circulation for four years and is also distributed in Hong Kong and Japan.

* * *

There was a clear muzzling of the media, but Malacañang could not care less.

It was a day of defeat for Philippine press at the hands of the national police.

It was a day to forget, but for President Macapagal-Arroyo, Monday's non-event inside Congress will be a game to remember.

She won the cheering contest handily by bringing in members of her exclusive team of backers.

The name of the game was show the world Gloria Macapagal Arroyo is not as detested and unpopular as she is.

Ms Arroyo dominated the one-sided match with a lot to spare.

* * *

No way she could lose her game, she played before a captive audience.

For a total of 33 times, guests applauded the short evasive speech of the besieged President who conveniently avoided touching on the rotten state of the nation.

There were also ovations, sparked by the excitable Speaker Jose de Venecia, who applauded with both hands and his two ears.

Now that JDV has again shown his true color and prowess, it would be proper for Ms Arroyo to reward the House Speaker.

Malacañang should next make Mr. De Venecia head a team, co-captained by Gov. Ben Evardone of Samar, to the Bootlicking Olympics which could be introduced in the London Games.

While Ms Arroyo's husband, her biggest fund-raiser, remains in exile on suspicion of racketeering, the President whooped it up with her team, totally oblivious of the hordes that tried to march close to the Batasan but were harshly prevented by armed military men.

Ms Arroyo had to use superior armed might so her own Fairytale Olympics could go on inside the prostituted halls of Congress.

This was the same might used to muzzle truth with the confiscation of thousands of copies of Pinoy Weekly.

* * *

It was not flashed on television, but the boiling, immeasurable protest rallies that fiercely detested the sinful reign of the GMA regime easily bared the true state of things in our shattered nation.

Curiously, there was a piece of good and truth inside Congress during the GMA Sona of Monday.

"The only section in the gallery which acted with appropriate formality and dignity," noted Malaya's editorial yesterday, "was—surprise—the military and the police leaders. No standing on their feet, no fawning applause."

The same editorial said these officers just listened and whatever reactions they had, they kept to themselves.

"And that's what gave us the shivers. The military and police leaders gave the impression they were the only ones in the gallery who realized the tinder box situation outside the halls of Batasan."

The state of the nation? It's mad.

And it would help President Macapagal-Arroyo if she's made to realize that only her policemen, backed by soldiers, held the boiling *masa* back and thus allowed her to bask in her make-believe Olympics.

MCC Active Open chess set

THE MCC Active Open Chess tournament kicks off this Sunday at the J&F Divino Building at 967 Aurora Blvd., near the LRT 2 Anonas Station, in Quezon City. The one-day P30,000-tournament is divided into four sections: Open, 2050 below; 1850 below and 1650 below. The six-round Swiss system event will be used with a time control of 25 minutes per player. Games start at 10 a.m. The open champion gets P5,000 and other section winners P3,000 each. For inquiries, call 826-8560 or 0916-852-1069.

Buknoy

July 27, 2005 Today's info
Buknoy is the National Book Development Board's (NBDB) official readership mascot.

Randy Solon, the creator of Buknoy, is a student of the College of Fine Arts of the University of the Philippines Diliman. He bested 49 entries in the national mascot design contest.

Buknoy, a contraction of *buk* (book) and *noy* (Pinoy,) aims to bring books closer to the hearts of Filipinos.

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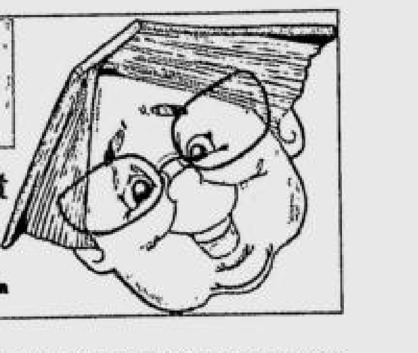

INQBOX
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Evaluating Eala

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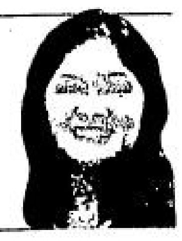

Beth Celis

RED Bull governor-team manager Tony Chua's cellphone was bombarded with calls the moment his plane touched down at the Naia airport from Xiamen, China, last Monday.

With so many reports to confirm, questions to ask, the press had eagerly awaited Tony's return. They wanted to hear it straight from the horse's mouth, so to speak, if it was true, for example, that a special board meeting would tackle the tenure of PBA commissioner Noli Eala, or if they had been meeting with a prospective candidate who would replace Noli.

Tony said that while away, he was constantly updated on what had been coming out in the papers. He couldn't understand all the fuss, all the controversy if, indeed, the board was planning a performance evaluation on the commissioner.

"What's so sinister about this? It's our prerogative. We have nothing to hide, because there's nothing wrong with a performance audit, especially now that we have a chair in San Miguel Beer's Ely Capacio. This is a normal practice among most corporations. In fact it's a standard operating procedure in most," he said.

However, Tony denied that they had been entertaining prospective replacements.

"*Hindi tutoo 'yan. Hindi ko alam kung saan galing 'yang balitang 'yan na wala namang* basis (That's not correct. I don't know where that unfounded report came from)."

Tony said he has not been notified about the special meeting.

The regular monthly board meeting is scheduled next Tuesday.

* * *

Tony, who is also team manager of the RP men's football squad, went to China to seek the assistance of Chinese national football coach Ho Eng Sam in the preparation of our squad for the SEA Games.

"I invited him to come to Manila to look over the team and he accepted. He'll be here from Aug. 15 to 30 to observe the Filipinos in practice," Tony reported.

In October, the team will fly to China to train there for three weeks under the same coach, he said.

"Remember, we're the host of this event. We have to give a highly creditable performance."

According to Tony, like most of the other NSA's, football has a problem.

"Funding. The association is broke. We have to raise funds for training and preparation, if we want to get anywhere."

* * *

I spoke separately with Tony and Talk 'N Text governor Ricky Vargas yesterday, but what they had to say was almost identical.

"A performance audit is good management practice. This way we can determine the actual condition of the league—its weak and strong points, the areas where we did well and where we need to improve. It will also give us the answers to why our organization—the PBA—performed the way it did during (Eala's) tenure," Ricky explained.

Ricky reiterated that there's really nothing wrong with a performance evaluation, except that some sectors, he suspects, are deliberately putting a wedge between the parties involved.

"They're making it a personal, emotional issue when in fact, it's only a performance management matter," Ricky said.

* * *

While we were at it, I asked Ricky if he had some prospective replacements in mind, just in case Noli fails the evaluation.

"Frankly, I'm surprised at the reports coming out in the papers," he said. "While we may have our differences with Noli, we would never do anything underhanded like entertain prospective replacements."

* * *

From what I gathered, PBA chair Ely Capacio, who has come back from Australia, intends to talk with the governors individually to find out who are in favor of a performance audit.

For sure, the house will again be divided. But I could be wrong.

Incidentally, I also talked with Sta. Lucia's Ariel Magno, who is representing Realtors governor Buddy Encarnado, who is currently vacationing in Alaska.

Attorney Magno said he is in favor of the evaluation.

Capacio: Too early to judge commish

By Musong R. Castillo

NEW PHILIPPINE Basketball Association chair Ely Capacio arrived from an official business trip to Australia over the weekend and was greeted with some unexpected news.

"I am at a loss as to what is happening," Capacio told the INQUIRER in a phone interview yesterday, when asked to comment on the reported plan by some board members to replace commissioner Noli Eala.

"So far, nothing has been discussed as far as a replacement (for Eala) is concerned. (I wonder) where all of these [news reports] are coming from."

Capacio also denied that there would be a special PBA board meeting at an undisclosed place on Aug. 2 to, among other matters, evaluate Eala's performance.

"It's pre-mature to evaluate (Eala's performance)," said the PBA chair. "We have not gone to that yet. But Noli, in fairness to him, has performed even in these turbulent times."

CAPACIO

EALA

Capacio, the former Purefoods slotman who is now San Miguel Beer representative to the board, also expressed surprise that some of his colleagues have started talking to the media.

"We (board members) should resolve all matters within the confines of the board room," he said. "We can all talk sensibly inside the boardroom."

Another board member contacted by the INQUIRER yesterday said that evaluating Eala's performance outside the boardroom would be "unprofessional." The board member requested that he not be named.

But it did not stop him from talking. He said Eala's handling of critical league issues "left much to be desired."

Plummeting gate receipts and dipping television ratings have been blamed on Eala, who took over from Jun Bernardino just before the start of the 2003 season.

The names of former senator and Ginebra San Miguel playing coach Robert Jaworski and former commissioner Rudy Salud have been floated as prospective replacement for Eala.

The INQUIRER carried a story on Sunday saying four ballclubs—Alaska, Sta. Lucia Realty, Red Bull Barako and Talk 'N Text—have started shopping around for a new commissioner.

On Monday, Alaska board representative Joaqui Trillo denied that the team was looking at the possibility of replacing the commissioner, saying they were "happy with Eala's performance."

DESPITE 4-0 START

Tams coach still cautious

By Jasmine W. Payo

COACH Bert Flores is admittedly thrilled with Far Eastern U Tamaraws' strong 4-0 start in the UAAP basketball tournament. But he only needs to remind himself of one team's heartbreaking campaign last season to stay focused.

"Last year, Ateneo went 7-0 under a rookie coach," said Flores. "But look what happened, they didn't end up winning."

The Eagles, under former coach Sandy Arespacochaga, swept the first round last season. Yet they surprisingly lost steam, notching only three victories in the second round.

"We're now seen as the big fish but we can't be overconfident," said Flores. "We always have to be ready, we have to keep on improving."

With 2004 Most Valuable Player Arwind Santos at the helm, the Tamaraws have been stamping their class by winning all their games in double figures.

Flores noted, however that the real test will come when they battle La Salle this Sunday.

Flores said the Archers' stunning back-to-back defeats to the University of the Philippines Maroons and the University of the East Warriors hardly showed the firepower of the defending champions.

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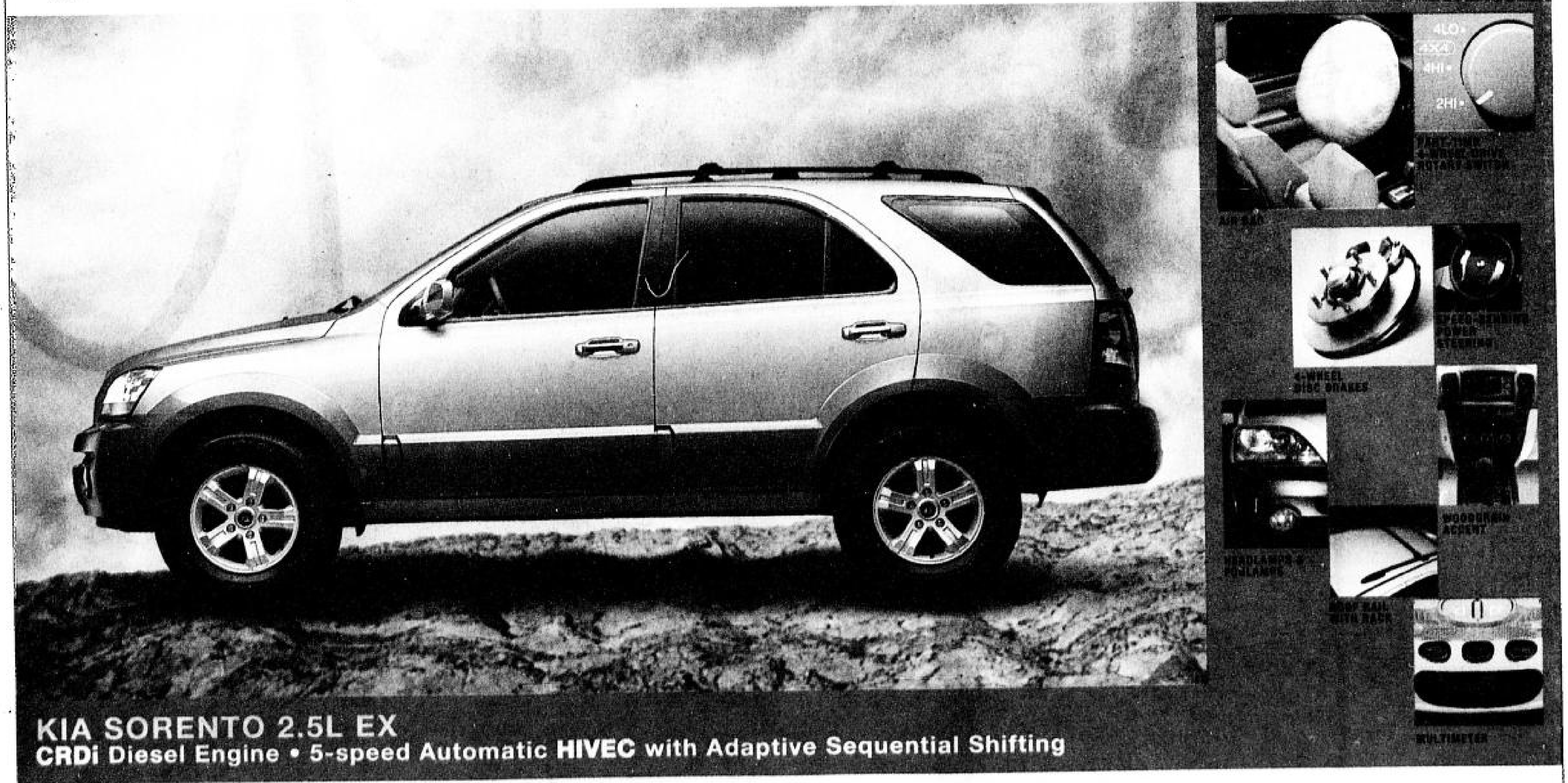
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'This time, Lance walked out the front door'

(Note: This Tour de France postscript was written by Chris Carmichael for the Associated Press. Carmichael has been Lance Armstrong's coach since 1990, guiding him to seven straight Tour titles. He wrote columns for The Associated Press during the race.)

PARIS—When Lance Armstrong asked for a microphone on the Champs-Elysees on Sunday to say goodbye to millions of cycling fans around the world, I suddenly remembered that his whole journey began with a discussion about retirement in the spring of 1998.

A few weeks earlier, Lance had dropped out of the Paris-Nice stage race in France in the first hour of the first day of the race. It was cold and raining, and Lance was soaked to the bone and miserable. Bad weather used to make him even bolder in races. But in the spring of 1998, he was no longer interested. He pulled over, tore the race number off his jersey, and told the mechanic he was going home.

When I walked through his garage after arriving in Austin, Texas, I noticed his bike was still packed in its travel case. He said he was through, that there was more to life than suffering in a pack of bike racers, eating bad food, and living out of a suitcase in a series of dingy hotels.

After everything he'd accomplished, his cycling career wasn't supposed to end with an anonymous exit from the back of the pack in an early season stage race in Europe. He was a world champion, an Olympian, and a cancer survivor who had returned from death's doorstep. And when it's time to call it a day, champions don't sneak out the back door.

By the end of that weekend, Lance agreed to do one more race. He was going to go out on his terms. In his news conference to announce his cancer diagnosis, he said he intended to race again as a professional cyclist, and he'd done that. He was going to do one more race and then retire in June 1998.

To prepare for his last race, Lance, Bob Roll and I traveled to Boone, North Carolina for a 10-day training camp. It rained for 10 days straight, but this time Lance wasn't climbing off his bike. He rode next to Bob, talking about life and bike racing, for hours.

Toward the end of the camp, I had Lance head over the same route the Tour DuPont had covered years before, to where Lance had won the hardest stage of America's premier stage race atop Beech Mountain. Somewhere on that mountain, the champion within Armstrong finally won the battle that had been raging in his mind and body. He wasn't going out like this.

Lance's battle against cancer was the biggest fight of his life. It took every ounce of his strength and his will, but he prevailed.

Now he had a second chance, but for what? You don't build a race car to run errands, and Lance decided he could only apply the lessons he learned from cancer to a goal of immense value. For a bike racer, the Tour de France is the biggest, hardest, most prestigious race you can win, so that's where he directed the full force of his newly found focus.

He grew into a consummate pro and weathered the scrutiny of the media and skeptics.

More than that, he honored his own battle against cancer, by showing the world that cancer survivors aren't fragile or broken.

Though we will all miss watching Lance dance up mountain passes and power through time trials at the Tour de France, the sport is bigger than any one man.

I don't know exactly what the future holds for Lance, but I'm confident his future successes will rival or exceed his success as a cyclist.

One of the hardest parts of being a pro athlete is knowing that it's not a job you keep for the rest of your life. As a result, it's important to consider how and when you want to walk away.

Lance wanted to retire before his performance started to decline, before he was referred to as the ex-champion who was now languishing in 70th place in the Tour of Whoknowswhere. Champions don't sneak out the back; they deliver one last great performance, say their goodbyes and walk out the front door.

That's what we talked about way back in 1998, and Lance just walked out the front door.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

World records fall; Hansen rules anew

MONTREAL—Brendan Hansen regained the upper hand in one of swimming's fiercest rivalries—and he didn't even need a world record to do it.

The record-breaking on Monday was left to Roland Schoeman and Jessica Hardy—one to be expected, the other a total shocker.

Michael Phelps seemed to be back on form, posting the best time in the semifinals of the 200-meter freestyle. But his first individual medal of the world swimming championships will have to wait another day.

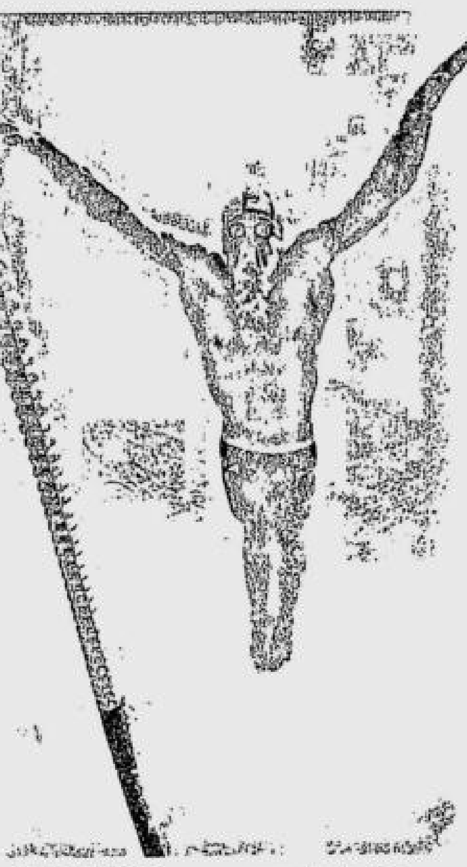
The highlight of the night was another showdown between Hansen, who holds world records in the 100 and 200 breaststroke, and Japan's Kosuke Kitajima, who swept Hansen in those events at the Athens Olympics last summer.

Eager for redemption, Hansen got another chance at the world championships, with Kitajima in the very next lane for the 100 final.

Hansen took control in the first 50 and touched first in 59.37 seconds—just off the record of 59.30 he set at last year's US Olympic trials. Kitajima was second in 59.53.

"Everyone keeps asking me, 'What was that extra thing I had tonight?'" Hansen said. "It was definitely emotion. Not many people get a second chance, so I didn't want to screw it up twice."

"Hansen seems to be very confident and I assumed he would be very happy to avenge the Athens Olympics," Kitajima said. "This time I lost, but at the next world championships, I think I could beat him."



BRENDAN Hansen competes in the men's 100-m breaststroke final. The american pool star avenged an Olympic loss to Japan's Kosuke Kitajima. AFP

The US won another gold in the final event of the night. Sixteen-year-old Katie Hoff, who was overcome by nerves in her Olympic debut at Athens, won the 200 individual medley.

Schoeman captured the 50 butterfly and broke the world record he set just a day earlier in the semifinals. He held off American Ian Crocker in a furious dash from one end of the pool to the other, touching in 22.96.

"Not bad for an African," quipped Schoeman, whose one-day-old record was 23.01. "I'd like to dominate the sprints in the future. I'll give it a shot."

Hardy, an 18-year-old American swimming in her first international event, seems to have quite a future after her stunning performance in the semifinals of the 100 breaststroke.

She got off the block quicker than anyone and never faltered down the stretch, posting a time of 1 minute, 6.20 seconds. That broke the record of 1:06.37 set two years ago by Australia's Leisel Jones at the Barcelona world championships.

When Hardy saw her time, accompanied by the world record graphic twirling in French on the scoreboard, she mouthed "Oh my God."

"It was definitely a shock, an awesome shock," Hardy said. "I feel like there's still room for improvement."

Jones will get a chance to reclaim the record in Tuesday's final. She was the second-fastest qualifier at 1:06.93.

"My goal was to make the finals," the Aussie said.

The Australians went 1-2 in the women's 100 butterfly. Jess Schipper claimed gold with a meet record of 57.23, just 14-hundredths of a second ahead of countrywoman Libby Lenton.

Poland's Otylia Jedrzejczak took the bronze.

"I can't believe it," Schipper said. AP

Thai ace upsets favored Croatian

LOS ANGELES—Thailand's Paradorn Srichaphan ousted sixth seed Mario Ancic of Croatia, 7-6 (7/4), 6-7 (4/7), 6-2, on Monday and seventh seed Sebastien Grosjean also exited from a $380,000 ATP tournament here.

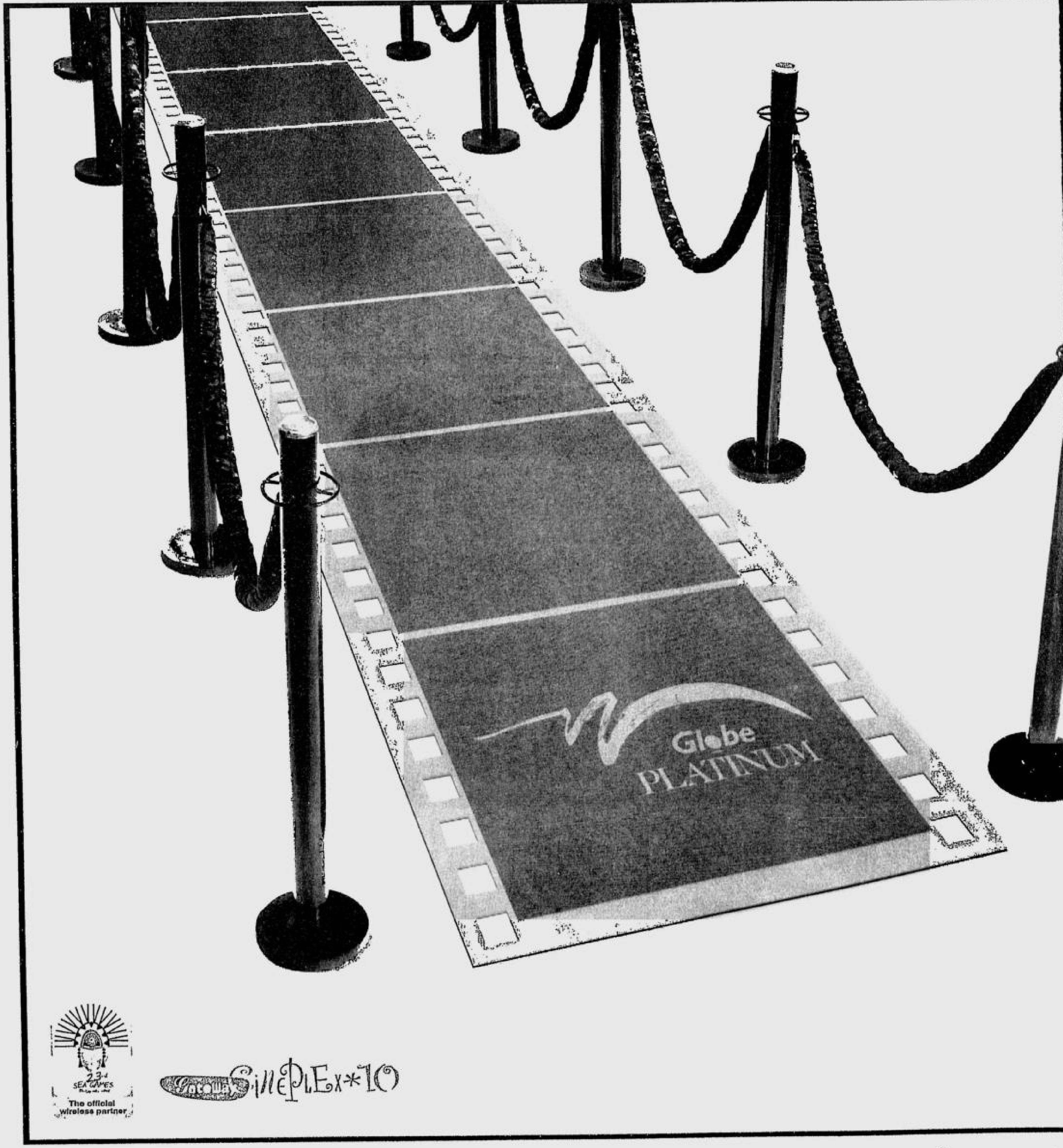
Paradorn, 44th in the latest ATP rankings, dumped 30th-rated Ancic to book a second-round match at the US Open hard-court tune-up event against American wild card Paul Goldstein, who ousted France's Cyril Saulnier, 6-4, 6-4.

Top seed Andre Agassi could await in the quarterfinals for Paradorn, who improved to 16-20 for the year and hopes to take back-to-back victories for only the second time in his past 14 tournaments just to reach the last eight.

Agassi opens Tuesday with a first-round match against French lucky loser Jean-Rene Lisnard. Agassi's second-round foe would be American Kevin Kim, who defeated Denmark's Kenneth Carlsen, 7-6 (7/2), 6-7 (3/7), 6-4.

Agassi has not played an ATP match since an opening-round loss at the French Open in May. A nagging sciatic nerve problem kept the 35-year-old American out of Wimbledon for the second year in a row, and fueled rumors that his days on the tour might be numbered.

Brazil's Ricardo Mello eliminated Grosjean 1-6, 6-2, 6-3. The 24-year-old South American left-hander advanced to a second round match against either a qualifier or American wild card Cecil Mamiit. AFP



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JOHN Daly blasts out of a bunker on the second fairway. AFP

Goosen-Mickelson burns Woods-Daly at 'Bridges'

RANCHO SANTA FE, California—South Africa's Retief Goosen birdied four of the last six holes Monday to lift himself and Phil Mickelson past top-ranked Tiger Woods and John Daly 5 and 3 at the "Battle at The Bridges."

Mickelson made five birdies in 13 holes to help spark the triumphant duo, who split $1 million while Woods and Daly shared $400,000 in the seventh annual made-for-television event featuring Woods.

Goosen and Daly, who shared third at the European Players Championship in Hamburg on Sunday, flew from Germany overnight to southern California. While long-hitting Daly struggled, Goosen showed no sign of fatigue.

"Goose played unbelievably good," Woods said. "I thought the jet lag might kick in but he was just too good."

Eight days after winning his 10th major title at the British Open, Woods found himself unable to sink the key putts while Mickelson, a member at the host club, paired well with Goosen and offered putting advice where needed.

"I started a little bit shaky but I had Phil to guide me around here," Goosen said. "We made some good putts and it went really well."

Mickelson said he felt like throwing away his putter at the US Open but felt like kissing it here.

"It's nice knowing the surface," Mickelson said. "It was smooth putting all around the course."

Mickelson and Goosen went 1-up by winning the fifth hole and kept that edge through the turn.

Woods lipped out a six-foot birdie putt at the 10th, failing to match Goosen and falling two holes down. Mickelson and Goosen took two of the next four holes with birdies to go 4 up with four to play and Goosen closed it out with a final birdie.

Mickelson and Woods each birdied the first hole. Woods birdied again on the par-3 second to give his duo their only lead but Mickelson answered with a 10-foot birdie at the par-3 fourth to level the match.

Goosen missed the first three greens while Daly found the water off the fourth tee, saying, "I feel like diving in there to wake up. That's horrible."

Daly also found the gallery off the fifth tee and yelled, "Sorry," afterwards. *AFP*

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Swim meet provides hope, inspiration

MONTREAL—The Sri Lankans are hardly medal contenders at swimming's World Championships. That's OK. They have more important things to worry about than putting up fast times in the pool.

Prabha Dharmadasa, Mayumi Raheem and Milinda Wickramasinghe, who are competing this week in Montreal, lost their homes in the December tsunami that killed over 30,000 in Sri Lanka alone. They are still living in temporary shelters.

"There are still many problems. There is so much still destroyed," said the Sri Lankan coach, EGA Wilson.

But swimming may provide a glimmer of hope to a devastated nation.

After the disaster, the government mandated that all children learn to swim. According to Wilson, police officers have been fanning out across the country, teaching kids the basic strokes.

The coach sees hope in meets such as the World Championships. Maybe one day, the initiative borne from tragedy will produce a world-class swimmer.

"That is a good way to look at it, so that is how I am looking at it," Wilson said.

FINA, swimming's world governing body, has tried to give struggling programs a boost, paying for travel, accommodations and meals for swimmers with meager financial backing from their home countries.

"The most important thing is to motivate them," FINA executive director Cornel Marculescu said.

For many, even that is a major challenge. Angola has been ravaged by disease and is still recovering from a civil war that lasted more than two decades, finally ending in 2002.

Eight swimmers were killed by bombings late in the conflict, said Antonio Monteiro, the head of the country's swimming federation.

Those sort of obstacles are foreign to countries such as Australia and the United States, which thrive with huge budgets and limitless resources.

"You watch the first couple of heats in some races and you root for the guys who've overcome so much just to dive into that pool," Australia's Michael Klim said.

Take the swimmers from Cameroon. The longest pools in their country are only 18 meters—compared with an Olympic-sized pool, which is 50 meters—and they're all inside resorts.

Swimmers Cole Shade and Alain Brigion-Tobe, have to ask for permission just to practice.

"You dive in and you almost hit the other end," Shade said.

Some swimmers concede they may never be able to compete with the top programs. But they'll always take the opportunity.

"Everyone dreams of being one of the top swimmers and getting a big name and all those endorsements like Michael Phelps or Ian Thorpe," said Zambian breaststroker Chisela Kanchela. "But being from a country like mine, you're realistic, too. You know a lot is against you.

"You swim anyway," he added, "because you love it." *AP*

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Signing of free agents in NBA delayed

NEW YORK—The NBA pushed back the free agency signing date again on Monday, forcing dozens of players to wait several days before they can begin signing contracts.

The moratorium on signings was supposed to end on Thursday, but now will likely last until Monday or Tuesday.

"The NBA is continuing to make progress with the players' association toward finalizing the collective bargaining agreement, and both sides are optimistic that the agreement will be signed by the end of the week," league spokesman Tim Frank said. "Once the agreement is completed, the league and the union will take 48-72 hours to educate teams and players as to the details of the agreement, after which player signings will begin."

Originally, the moratorium was due to expire last Friday. It was delayed to allow attorneys for the league and union to finish drafting a written version of the new six-year collective bargaining agreement.

Teams have been negotiating with free agents throughout July, and many of the most prominent players have already reached tentative agreements on new contracts.

Among those still unsigned are Miami's Damon Jones, Los Angeles Clippers guard Marko Jaric, Portland's Damon Stoudamire, Minnesota's Latrell Sprewell and Atlanta's Tyronn Lue.

Among players planning to change teams, guard Larry Hughes is moving from Washington to Cleveland. *AP*

RP, Vietnam arnis masters in August dual showdown

By Marc Anthony Reyes

WHILE most of the national athletes are sharpening their skills abroad for the Southeast Asian Games in November, the Philippine arnis team is hosting a foreign team to test its mettle.

The RP arnisadors, called back to duty after 14 long years since making their SEA Games debut in 1991, are training at home where the sport originated and gained worldwide prestige.

Arnis association official Jun Lotta said a team from Vietnam will play a dual tournament here on Aug. 4 as part of its preparation for the Nov. 27-Dec. 5 Games.

The Philippines, according to Lotta, is bent on winning at least four of the six gold medals at stake in the SEA Games.

Of all the countries taking part in the Philippine indigenous sport, he said Vietnam has the strongest chance of challenging the host for the overall crown.

The team has been training since last year, regularly from 5-9 p.m. at the Philsports. The actual SEA Games competition, though, will be held at the Casino Filipino in Parañaque City.

Still, Lotta said the Philippine team coached by Raffy Montalbo will fly to the United States early September as part of their training considering the sport's popularity in the US, where it's portrayed in Hollywood martial arts films.

Arnis is one of the disciplines the country is expected to dominate in the SEA Games.

SEAG drive to intensify next month

THE PUBLIC awareness campaign for the 23rd Southeast Asian Games which the country is hosting on Nov. 27 to Dec. 5 will be in full swing by next month.

Roberto Pagdanganan, chair of the Philippine SEA Games Organizing Committee, yesterday told the PSA Forum at the Pantalan Restaurant in Manila that the media blitz will cover television, radio, newspapers and the internet.

"It will be in full swing next month and we will be more actively promoting the SEA Games," said Pagdanganan,w ho also holds a cabinet rank as president of the Philippine International Trade Corp. "We will start focusing on projecting the Games."

Pagdanganan said Philsoc is finalizing the materials to be used in the campaign, including the 30-second ads to be shown on television and similar versions to be aired on the radio. Articles regarding the Games will soon be available in its official website.

The former secretary of tourism said everything is going on well, including the raising of the needed P1 billion to plan and run the Games.

Gorres battles Thai Saturday

PROMISING Filipino boxer Z Gorres takes on Deeden Kengkarun of Thailand in a special 10-round bout this Saturday at the newly renovated San Andres gym.

Billed as "Return of the Z," the boxing promotion will be Gorres' first ring appearance since his first round demolition of Los Angeles-based Glenn Donaire in the undercard of the Manny Pacquiao-Eric Morales super-featherweight match in Las Vegas, Nevada, four months ago.

The hard-hitting protégé of boxing patron Tony Aldeguer vows to put on a similar show against his Thai opponent in their super-flyweight match.

Gorres guested in the PSA Forum yesterday at the Pantalan Restaurant in Manila. He was accompanied by Cebu promoter Sammy Gello-ani, American agent Mike Kocz, World Boxing Organization Asia-Pacific representative Leon Panoncillo, Kengkarun and fellow boxers Ray Bautista and Michael Domingo.

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Race 4—1. Queen of Gala 2. Manileño 3. El Cid 4. American Beauty
Race 5—1. Streisand 2. Angel Eyes 3. Bom's Bom's 4. Flying Strike 5. Sea of Galilee
Race 6—1. Holy King 2. Mercurian/Expediter 3. Stingray 4. Heart of Jonna
Race 7—1. Schwarzenegger 2. Silver Cho Cho 3. Reporter 4. Day Break 5. Beautiful Task
Race 8—1. Starry Night 2. Feng Shui 3. Juan Marco 4. Peek A Boo 5. Reign of Fire 6. Fantasia

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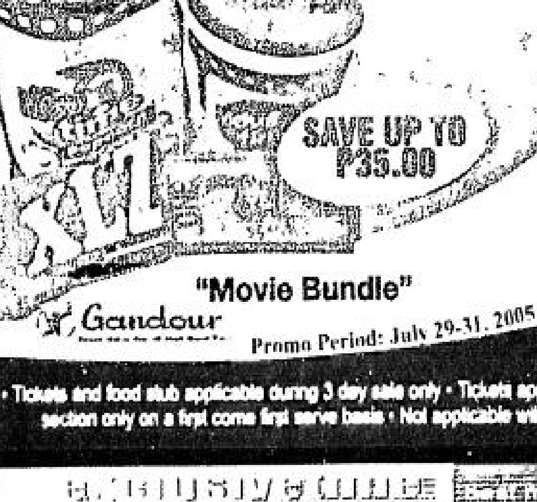
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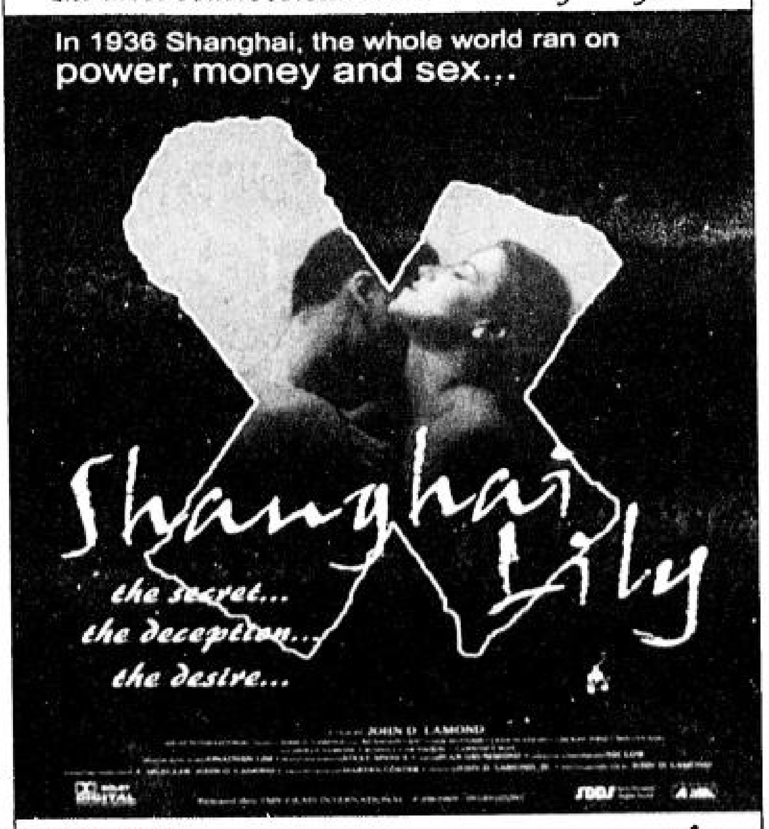
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Petron beach volley eyes int'l tourney

ORGANIZERS of the Petron Ladies beach volley ball series hope to invite Asian teams in future tournaments.

"That's a dream," said former sports commissioner Tisha Abundo, the prime mover of the prestigious women's volleyball event. "It would entail a lot of resources but we really would like to make it to the Asian level and host it here first."

Abundo made the announcement during yesterday's PSA Forum at the main function room of the Pantalan restaurant in Manila, where she launched the third leg of the tournament together with St. Francis players Ingrid Verayo and Marie Mycah Mariano and City College of Manila's Diane Destajo.

Also present in the public sports program sponsored by Red Bull, Circure, Supermax, Pagcor and Manila Mayor Lito Atienza was Manila Sports Council (Masco) chair Ali Atienza, whose office is co-sponsoring the two-day competition to be held at the Baywalk near the Manila Yacht Club for the very first time.

The weekend tilt is sponsored by Petron and supported by the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Pagcor, Toyota Pasong Tamo, Villa de Oro and ACSAT with Speedo as official outfitter and Mikasa as official ball.

A total of 20 ladies from ten teams are competing in the tourney offering cash prizes and a berth in the grand finals set in December.

The veteran pair of Patricia Siatan and Jennifer Bohawe won the first leg and automatically clinched a berth in the grand finals, along with second leg winners Michelle Laborte and Cecille Tabuena.

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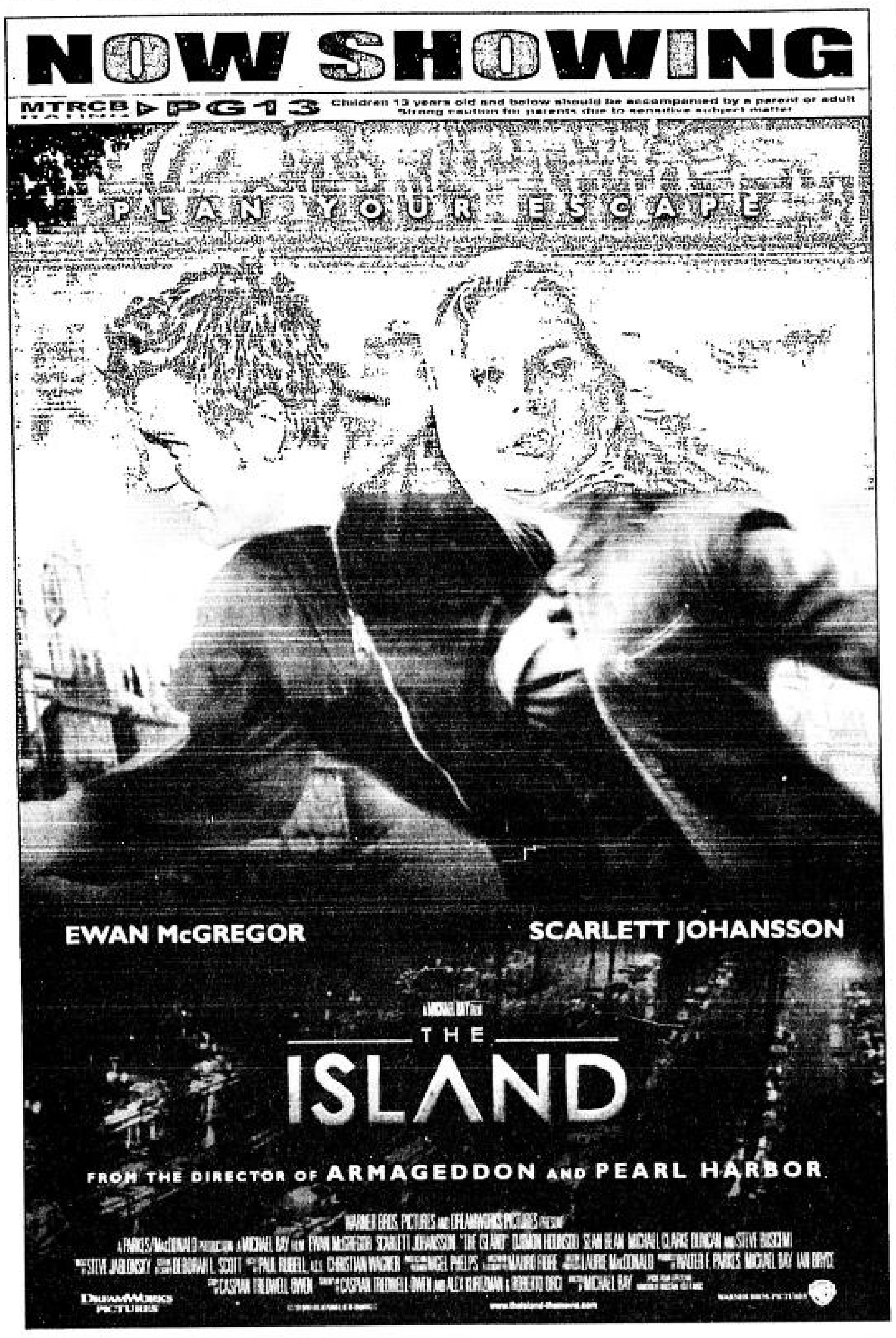
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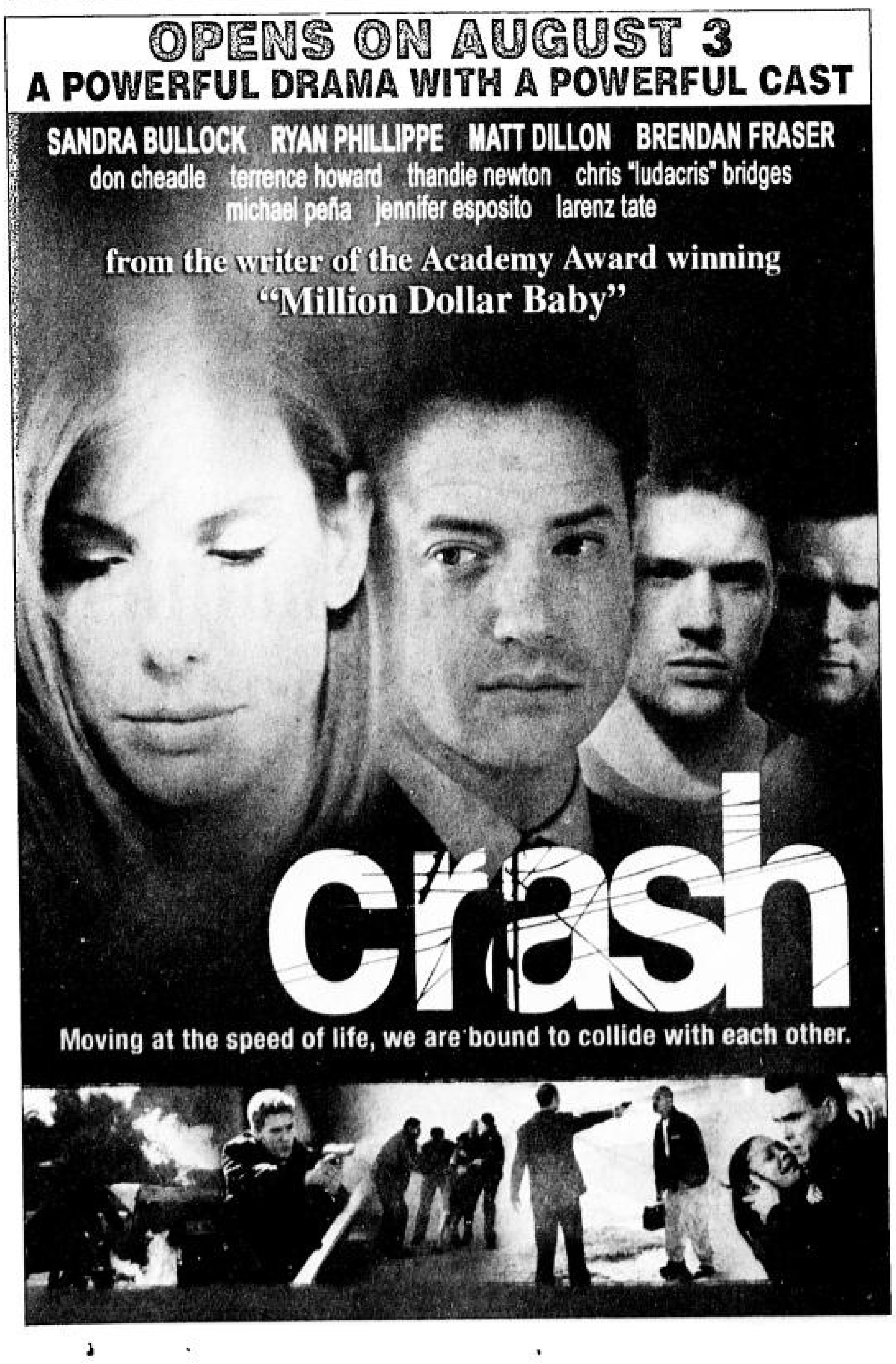
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SPORTS

Saints nails No. 2 as Hawks roll to 75th victory in row

By Marc Anthony Reyes

CHRIS Manalili scored 11 of his 13 points in the fourth quarter to power St. Clare College of Novaliches to its second straight victory with a 69-64 conquest of Ama Computer University yesterday at the resumption of the Naascu men's basketball at the UM gym.

The come-from-behind triumph far outshone that of unbeaten University of Manila which expectedly rolled over University of Makati, 76-65, for its second win in a row this season and 75th since the league began in 2002.

Beefed up by veterans who honed up their skills by winning the Naascu summer tournament last month, the Saints worked their way up from a 49-55 deficit at the end of the third to duplicate their masterful debut last Saturday.

St. Clare coach, former PBA center Joel Dualan, said the Dickies'-sponsored team is starting to show character and didn't lose composure under grinding pressure. Amacu dropped to its second loss in as many games.

"Our training paid off," said the burly Dualan, who was dubbed "El Aparador" when he was still playing for Shell in the pro league. "I hope we can continue to play at this level and develop a fighting attitude."

A designated wingman, Manalili typified that strength of character when he took the slack of Nino Songco, who after scoring 30 points in their 93-87 win over University of Makati on opening day could only make six points.

In the second game, the Hawks encountered little trouble despite experimenting on their plays against the Wizards, who fell to 0-2.

Main men Ryan Regalado and Richard Litonjua were hardly fielded in, in favor of hot rookie Onofre Napiza, who didn't disappoint by making 16 points, behind the team-high 18 markers of Leopoldo Santiago.

STI also notched its second win at the expense of New Era University, 75-69, even as Centro Escolar University barged into the win column with an 86-69 victory over Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila.

The STI Olympians leaned heavily on Marlon Martin who scored 22 points, while Dexter Micutuan added 14 points to upset the Hunters, who dropped to 1-1.

The Scorpions, losers to the Hawks in the inaugurals, bounced back to inflict the Eagles' second straight loss.

GAMES TOMORROW (*UM Gym*)

1 p.m.—PLP vs Univ. of Makati
2:30 p.m.— Centro Escolar U vs STI
4 p.m. – Univ. of Manila vs Amacu

First Game

ST. CLARE 69—Manalili 13, Diaz 9, Badley 7, Songco 6, Cole 6, Geraldino 6, Manas 6, Siruma 5, San Pedro 5, Francisco 3, Masmayor 0, Diswe 0, Dizon 0, Gali 0.

AMACU 64—Vergara 19, Zablan 12, Dulce 10, Ramos 6, Dublin 5, Matias 4, Edralin 3, Spaulding 2, Panahon 0, Bull 0.

Quarters: 18-17, 34-38, 49-55, 69-64.

Second Game

UM 76—Santiago 18, Napiza 16, Maliksi 12, Litonjua 9, Bernados 9, Regalado 6, Guimpatan 2, Bonus 0, Delostrinos 0.

UMAK 65—Mangaran 14, Bangulbang 13, Lorica 10, Tamaray 9, Commerciace 8, Nograda 6, Tapit 3, Del Rosario 2, Lunag 0, Domangcas 0.

Quarters: 17-13, 35-38, 55-50, 76-65.

Milo Marathon visits Davao City Sunday

DAVAO CITY—The 29th National Milo Marathon goes to this home of the Philippine Eagle and waling-waling in Southern Mindanao this Sunday.

The race, to be fired off on San Pedro Street in front of Rizal Park, features the 5K fun run, the kiddies 3K age-group competition and the centerpiece 21K race, where the top three finishers in the men's and women's divisions will advance to the National Finals slated on Oct. 9 in Metro Manila.

Also featured in the event being held in partnership with Bayview Park Hotel, adidas, Cebu Pacific, Smart kid, Department of Tourism, Addict Mobile Prepaid, and Power Bar are the inter-school cheer dance and team competition and the biggest delegation contest.

Last year, the elimination race here was ruled by Rodel Bustamante and Stella Mamac-Diaz.

Diaz eventually ruled the National Finals and is already seeded for this year's grand finale.

Sans Diaz, the Region XI crown is wide open for the picking with last year's runner-up Jho-An Banayag favored to rule Sunday's big event. Expected to challenge her for the crown and the P10,000 top purse are Cherrlyn Javellana, Genalyn Canete and Raquel Velasco.

Bustamante is also favored to retain his crown.

C de Oro Stars down Jets; Bacchus debuts vs Spring

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Playing for the first time after skipping Cagayan de Oro's previous five games, All-Star Jayson Alfeche scored seven of his 11 points in the fourth quarter to lift the Stars past the Parañaque Jets, 61-56, Monday in the 2005 Panasonic-NBC national basketball championship at the Xavier University gym here.

Alfeche knocked in six in an 8-2 run that wiped out the Jets' five-point lead and gave the lead back to ex-Misamis Oriental Gov. Antonio Calingin's Stars for good, 55-54, with 3:41 left.

Meanwhile, Bacchus/Harbour Centre makes its NBC debut at 6 p.m. today against Spring Cooking Oil-backed Laguna at the Lyceum gym in Intramuros.

A guest team in the country's leading regional loop, Bacchus/Harbour, will be led by former Letran Knight Arturo Enrile, Nani Epondulan, Arjun Cordero, Kenneth Co Yu Kang, Britt Reroma, Allan Gamboa, Harold Sta. Cruz and Fil-Americans Rich Hardin and Francis Rauschmayer.

"My team was formed in less than a week, but we're determined to give our NBC rivals a run for their money," said Bacchus/Harbour coach Lawrence Chongson.

The Stars improved to 2-4 while the Jets fell to 3-5 in the event supported by Panasonic, Sulpicio Lines, Spring Cooking Oil, Accel, Molten, Nature's Spring, Far Eastern Insurance, Skygo, Sirlitz, Hapee Toothpaste, Dewfoam, KSK Food Products (Boy Bawang), Bayview Park Hotel and Holiday Plaza-Cebu.

The Stars rank seventh in the Southern Conference, behind Ozamiz (7-2), Tribu Sugbu (7-2), Mantawi (5-3), Iligan (5-4) and Valencia (3-5) but ahead of Iloilo (2-6) and Zanorte (1-8).

Forward Taguig paces the Northern Conference at 6-0, followed by Cavite (6-5), Laguna (4-3), Parañaque and Baguio (1-5).

The scores:

CdO 61—Alfeche 11, Ramos 9, Numeran 8, Isidro 8, Dela Victoria 6, Agusan 6, Diango 5, Tadena 4, Culdora 2, Jabagat 2, Torres 0, Romaguera 0.

PARAÑAQUE 56—Rodriguez 13, Basilides 11, Bognot 8, Ruiz 8, Saquilayan 5, Marquez 4, Lopez 3, Buendia 2, Yambao 2, Tolentino 0, Guiyab 0, Ollano 0.

Quarters: 17-15, 31-25, 47-45, 61-56

SUPER (AL) KIDS. Wolen Juan Superal (center) proudly shows his championship trophy in the 11-12 year-old division of the recent 2005 World Junior Golf Championship held at Cotton Woods Golf & Country Club in San Diego, California. The long-hitting Wolen scored a record-setting 21-under-par. His sisters Crystal (second from left) and Princess (front right) also fared well. Crystal placed 7th in the 13-14 age bracket while Princess ranked 5th in the 7-8 age bracket. The Superal siblings were part of the 10-member Philippine delegation to the 2005 World Jungolf whose trip was sponsored by Philippine Airlines. The Superal kids arrived Thursday on board PR 103, accompanied by their parents Wendy (left), who acted as mentor-coach, and Grace (right).

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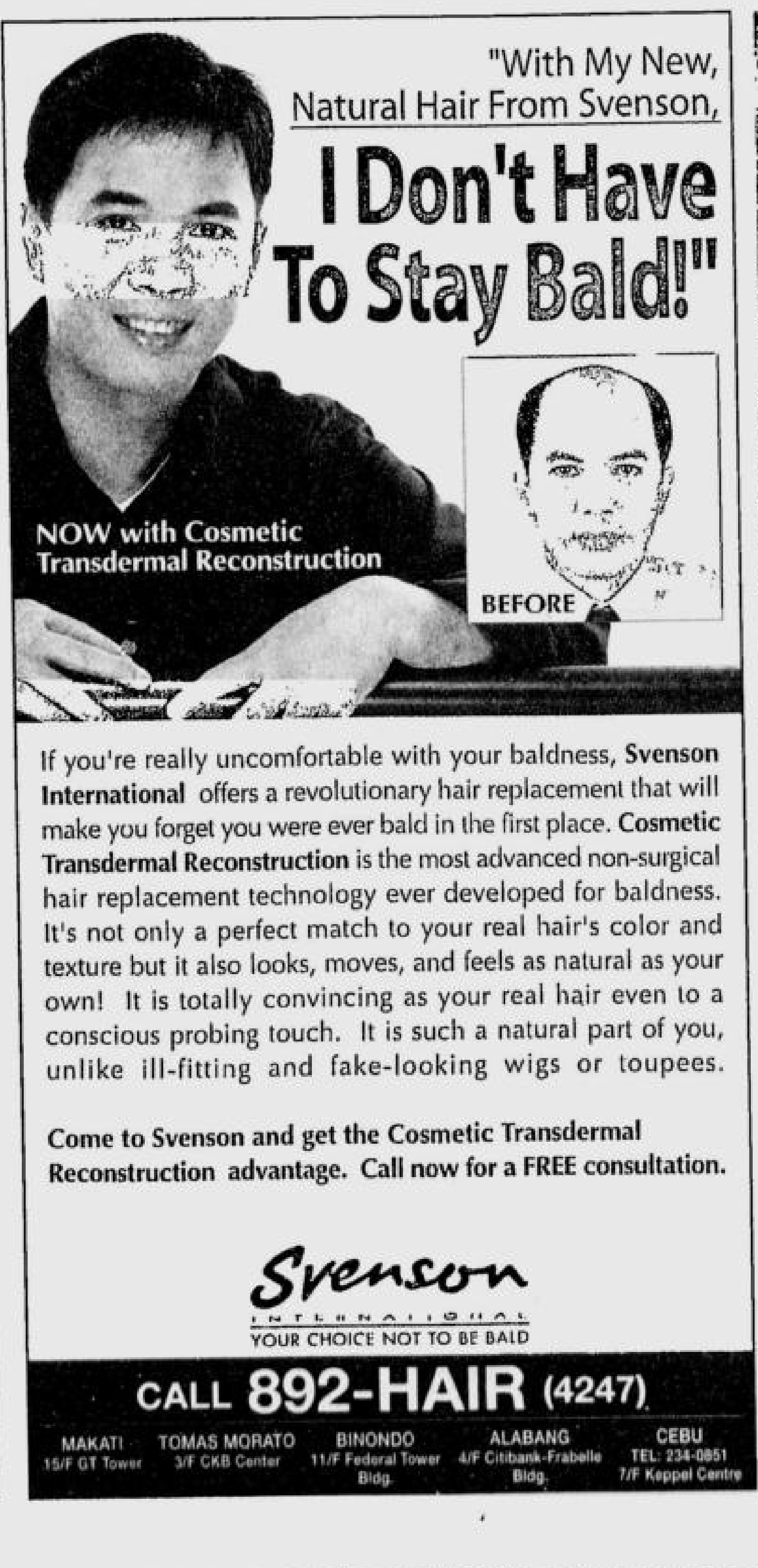

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LHUILLIER (middle) and playing coach Lan Perez give out baseball gloves to clinic participants.

Cebuana Lhuillier bats for slo-pitch

JEAN Henri Lhuillier is making good his commitment to promote slo-pitch softball in the country.

Encouraged by a string of international successes enjoyed by his Cebuana Lhuillier slo-pitch softball team, which has already won four Asian club level championships the past two years, Lhuillier accepted the position of commissioner for slo-pitch softball from the Amateur Softball Association of the Philippines (Asaphil).

Cebuana Lhuillier has won back-to-back Pangaea Cup titles here in Manila, last year's Bangkok International Slo-pitch and this year's 22nd South East Asian Championship in Jakarta.

As part of his long-term program for the sport, Lhuillier recently sponsored a weekend combined clinic and invitational demonstration tournament in Cebu with Cebuana Lhuillier and sister team Le Soleil de Boracay playing against local teams Cebu Flag Football Association's/CIS PTA selection and the Salazar Colleges of Science and Institute of Technology (SCSIT).

The half day clinic, conducted by Lhuillier himself and his players, attracted more than 50 participants, ranging from elementary to high school and college students, with a sprinkling of young professionals.

The one-day tournament, organized by Cebuana Lhuillier player and local businessman Rayner Sangil and held at the Cebu Boardwalk in Mandaue City, saw Cebuana Lhuillier sweep its games against Le Soleil, 15-12, Ceb Flag Football Associations/CIS-PTA, 25-6, and Salazar Colleges, 18-0, to emerge champion. Lhuillier handed out medals to the CFFA/CIS-PTa and SCSIT players for their participation.

E-mail:
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Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

ENTERTAINMENT

Text us your feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

OPENING TODAY

D' Anothers

Directed by Joyce Bernal
Stars Vhong Navarro, Toni Gonzaga, Jhong Hillario, Joross Gamboa

VHONG plays Jesus Resurrection, who like Neo in "The Matrix" is also called "The One." He inherited a haunted mansion and, like the little boy in "The Sixth Sense," he sees dead people. Jesus tries to help the ghosts move on to the next world through a portal in the haunted mansion which opens every half-a-century. The movie pays tribute to—or rips off, depending on your point of view—Japanese thriller "Ringu," local horror movie "Feng Shui," Academy Award-winner "Bata, Bata, Paano Ka Ginawa," and Hollywood movies such as "The Matrix" (oh, we said that already?) and "8 Mile."

Sa Pagitan ng Langit

Directed by Cesar SB Abella
Stars Raja Montero, Nika Madrid

OUR ONLY info on the movie: It was approved without cuts. It's rated R-18 and is strictly for adults only. Raja and Nika, famous for showing off their bodies, made two other movies—"Nakaw na Sandali" and "Hayop sa Ganda, Hanep sa Porma."

The Machinist

Directed by Brad Anderson
Stars Christian Bale, Jennifer Jason Leigh

PETER Bradshaw, in his March 18 review for The Guardian, wrote: "You haven't seen Method acting like this since Robert De Niro's legendary podgefest for 'Raging Bull' in 1980. And frankly, Christian Bale's horrifying transformation in this contemporary Gothic chiller makes De Niro look like an uncommitted wuss. He plays Reznik, a gloomy metal-shop worker who has not slept in a year, and who has lost so much weight he is a walking skeleton, a zombie bag of bones. Reznik fears someone is out to get him and Brad Anderson's movie is about his descent into paranoid hallucination and horror. But does he, like many paranoiacs, have real enemies after all?"

The Wedding Crashers

Directed by David Dobkin
Stars Owen Wilson, Vince Vaughn, Christopher Walken, Jane Seymour

VAUGHN and Wilson are a pair of divorce mediators who spend their weekends crashing weddings in a search for one-night stand Ms. Right. Until one of them falls for the engaged daughter of an influential and eccentric politician played by Christopher Walken.

Roger Ebert, in his July 15 review for the Chicago-Sun Times, wrote: "'Wedding Crashers' is all runway and no takeoff. It assembles the elements for a laugh-out-loud comedy, but it can't make them fly. There are individual moments that are very funny. But it takes a merciless focus to make a good comedy, and the director, David Dobkin, has too much else on his mind. There are sequences involving Vaughn and Wilson where you sense that the actors should have just broken into the cockpit and taken over the controls. There are few lonelier sights than a good comedian being funny in a movie that doesn't know what funny is. The concept is terrific. The ads will fill the theaters on opening weekend, but people will trail out thinking, gee, I dunno..."

Stealth

Directed by Rob Cohen
Stars Josh Lucas, Jessica Biel, Jamie Foxx, Sam Shepard

MARK Deming of All Movie Guide wrote this summary for the New York Times: "Kara Wade (Biel), Henry Purcell (Foxx), and Ben Gannon (Lucas) are three highly ranked US Navy pilots who are part of a top-secret project involving the next generation of stealth fighter technology, the Talon Jet. Wade, Purcell and Gannon are surprised when their commander, Captain George Cummings (Shepard), introduces them to the new member of their team—Edi, an 'extreme deep invader' developed as part of the Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicle program. Utilizing the latest innovations in artificial intelligence, Edi is a computer-based flight controller that will take over the wingman's position in the team's formation, and while the pilots initially balk, Edi performs admirably in its first mission. However, after Edi is struck by lightning on a return trip, the computer's circuits and software begin to change in unexpected ways, and Edi not only begins to think for itself, it begins to violate direct orders."

Only 'wholesome' shows for Channel 11

By Marinel R. Cruz

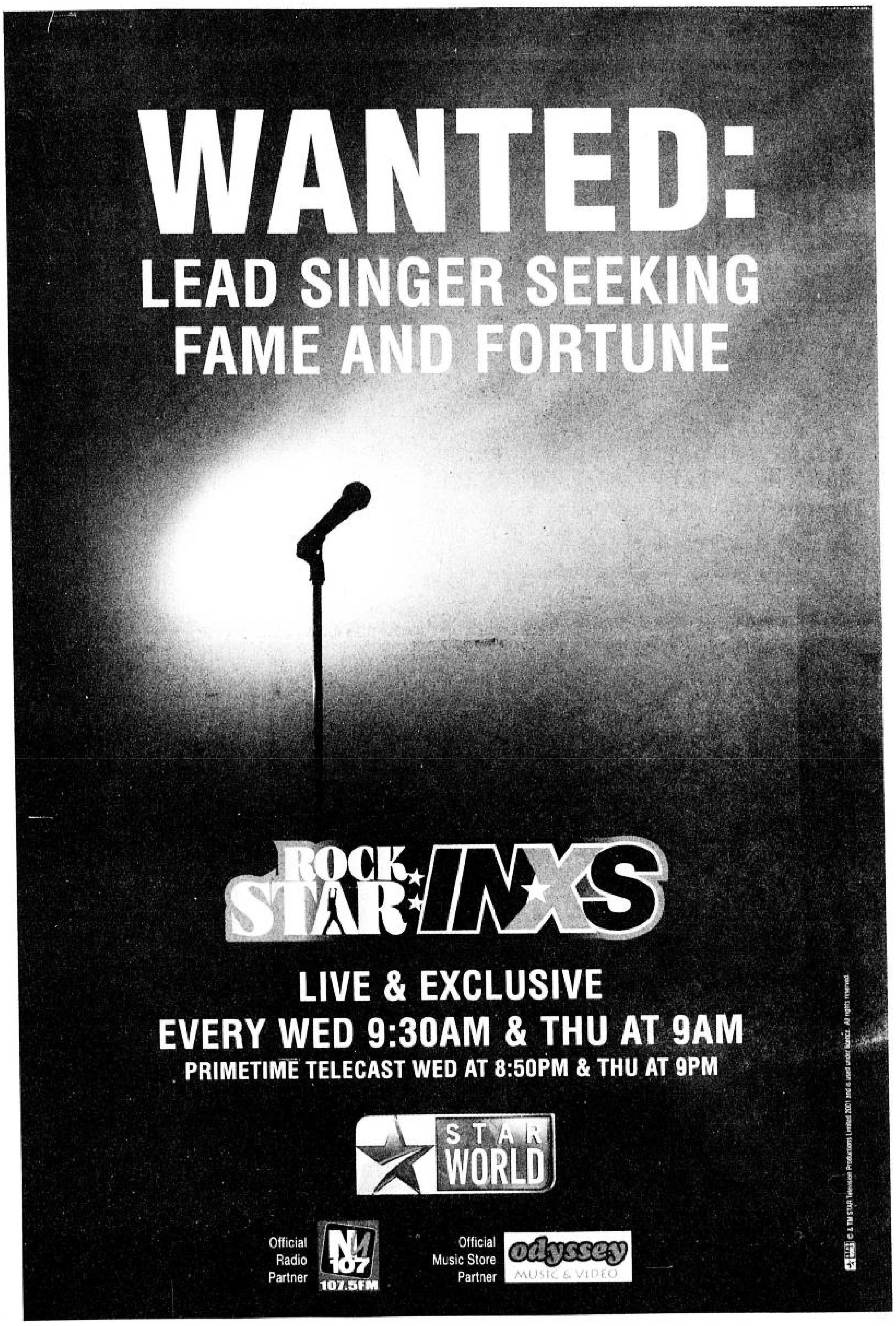
CHANNEL 11 will air wholesome shows targeting families, says Galvante.

"WHOLESOME" entertainment programs that "have nothing to do with any sect" will be aired on Channel 11 when GMA Network takes over its programming starting September, according to GMA 7 vice president for TV entertainment Wilma Galvante.

Galvante said this even as GMA Network signed a block-time deal recently with Zoe Broadcasting Network, owned by the religious group Jesus is Lord Movement. GMA 7's Citynet Marketing Productions Inc. will produce and supply shows to Channel 11 daily.

"I didn't see any religious program in the

ONLY/ A2-4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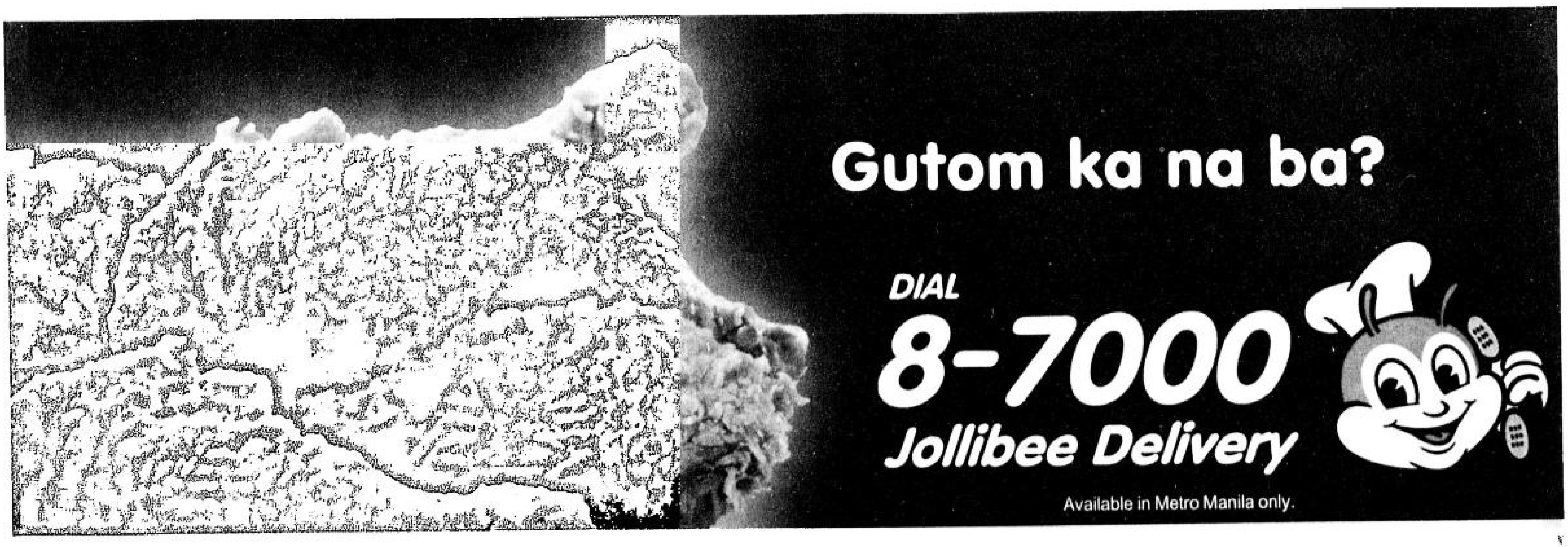


WORLD PREMIERE, PHILS.: AUG.10
$80M SUPER PRODUCTION
The Great Raid on Cabanatuan
THE DARING EXPLOIT THAT WOULD LIBERATE MORE THAN 500 AMERICAN & FILIPINO POWs IN THE FACE OF OVERWHELMING ODDS.

The Planning

The Training

The Execution

April 9, 1942: Luzon Force commander Gen. King surrenders 70,000 American and Filipino troops , the largest army surrender in U.S. history, at Bataan.

April 10, 1942: Japanese Army sets their POWs onto the 65-mile long Bataan Death March. Hundreds of U.S. and Filipinos soldiers will die of starvation, disease and executions.

April, 1942: The POWs are taken to Camp O'Donnell. 1,500 Americans and 15,000 Filipinos die in the first two months of their imprisonment.

June, 1942: POWs are transferred to a camp at Cabanatuan, where hundreds die in the first month of starvation, tropical illness and torture, a pattern that will continue over the next 3 years.

August, 1944: The Japanese War Ministry issues a 'Kill All Policy' – a broad edict calling for the deaths of all remaining POWs under their authority.

October 20, 1944: Gen. MacArthur returns to the Philippines.

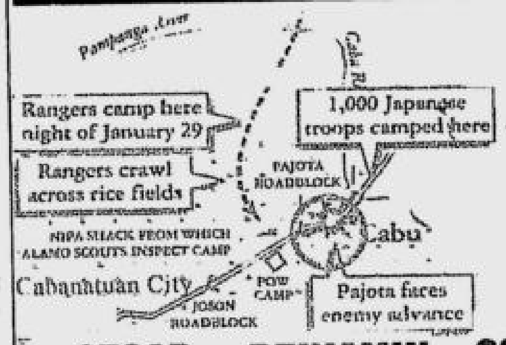
December 14, 1944: Palawan : POW camp- 150 American and Pilipino soldiers are summarily executed -- rumors circulate that Cabanatuan will be next.

January 27, 1945: Col. Henry Mucci and his 6th Army Rangers, together with the Filipino resistance fighters led by Capt. Juan Pajota, are ordered to execute the suicide raid on Cabanatuan to save the POW's.

January 27, 1945: Alamo Scouts begin stealth reconnaissance behind enemy lines.

January 30, 1945: The most incredible raid on Cabanatuan begins.

January 31, 1945: The POWs are free. A mission that really couldn't succeed...and yet it did.


Pampanga River
Rangers camp here night of January 29
1,000 Japanese troops camped here
Rangers crawl across rice fields
PAJOTA ROADBLOCK
NIPA SHACK FROM WHICH ALAMO SCOUTS INSPECT CAMP
Cabu
Cabanatuan City
POW CAMP
JOSON ROADBLOCK
Pajota faces enemy advance

CESAR MONTANO BENJAMIN BRATT CONNIE NIELSEN JOSEPH FIENNES JAMES FRANCO

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D' ANOTHERS
THE MACHINIST
1:45 / 4:10 / 6:35 / 9:00

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FANTASTIC FOUR
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HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
12:50 / 3:00 / 5:10 / 7:20 / 9:30

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❶ D' ANOTHERS
❷ STEALTH
❸ THE ISLAND
12:30 / 3:10 / 5:50 / 8:30
❹ FANTASTIC FOUR
11:50 / 2:05 / 4:20 / 6:35 / 8:50
❺ WEDDING CRASHERS
12:00 / 2:50 / 5:40 / 8:30
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CENTER EVENTS
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Joyce's sixth sense

By Nini Valera

SEEING dead people has not stopped Bernal from directing horror movies.

DIRECTOR Joyce Bernal sees dead people.

"I believe in ghosts because I see them," Joyce told INQUIRER Entertainment last week.

"I see them everywhere—in the comfort room, in restaurants, in corridors."

During filming of her latest movie "D' Anothers," a comic take on the horror genre starring Vhong Navarro, Joyce was haunted by a young boy wearing old-fashioned shoes.

"We were on location for the movie in this old house in Guiguinto, Bulacan," Joyce related. "I would see this young boy. But he would disappear. I couldn't see his face clearly. I'm not sure how old he was. Then I asked the caretaker if there was a young boy living in the house. There was none. I asked her if she had seen the young boy. She never saw him, she said, but she could feel him."

Joyce said there were old photographs of the people who had lived in the house. There were children in the photos, but Joyce could not identify which one of them had been following her around.

Another encounter with ghosts happened at the Sampaguita Studios some time ago. Joyce would stay up late at night in the editing suite to finish her work.

"It was early in the morning, after a night of editing, when I saw people gathered in the patio of the old church in the Sampaguita compound," she said. "I didn't know who they were, but there were quite a number (of them)."

But one encounter with a ghost had scared Joyce out of her wits.

She related: "I was in a restaurant when I first saw the ghost. At that time, I was living in a boarding house on Kamias Road in Quezon City. The ghost followed me home. First, it was a dog. Then it became a woman. She was in the living room of the boarding house. I could hear her talking, but I couldn't understand what she was saying. I followed the sound and it was coming from under a table. I peeked under the table, but no one was there. Then I realized the ghost was already standing beside me. I knocked on the door of my landlady's room and asked her if I could spend the night there."

The landlady was startled by her request, Joyce said, and she had to tell her about the ghost.

"She didn't see what I saw," said Joyce. "After that incident, I didn't return to the boarding house for three days. I couldn't sleep for several nights. That scared me."

Seeing dead people has not stopped Joyce from directing horror movies.

"But they must also be comedy," she said. "If it's straight horror, I would be scared, too."

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2 STEALTH
3 (DOLBY) THE ISLAND
4 (DTS) MONSTER IN LAW

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(LAS PINAS) tel. 8735004
1 (DOLBY)
2 RESERVED

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 D' ANOTHER
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DOLBY) NEW POLICE STORY
4 (DTS) THE JACKET

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 THE ANOTHERS

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) SA PAGITAN NG LANGIT
2
3 SEX SCANDAL
4 (DTS)

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) THE ISLAND
2 STEALTH
3 (DTS) D' ANOTHERS
4 CAMPUS GHOST STORY
5 SEX SCANDAL

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 D' ANOTHERS
2 THE ISLAND
3 NEW POLICE STORY
4 HERBIE FULLY LOADED

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 SA PAGITAN NG LANGIT
2

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

SHOW TIME

All-girl band at Calesa

THE MUSIC of the '60s, '70s and '80s take center stage this Friday at Hyatt Regency Manila's Calesa Bar, 10 p.m. up till the wee hours. Onstage, Rhythm and Babes, an all-girl band.

The girls started as Rock and Roll Mamas four years ago. The group is composed of lead vocalist Ann Borgaily, lead guitarist and vocalist Eileen Macabeo, keyboardist Love Guevarra, rhythm guitarist Lulu Katigbak and drummer Anna Fenstad.

Tonight

"Follies de Mwah!" at Club Mwah! Call 535-7943.

Side A at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

Twisted Pair at Suburbia

Maila Andres at the Pan Pacific Hotel

Silk at Fiesta San Miguel Dusit Hotel Nikko

Dawn Bande at Quisine, 6750 Ayala Ave.; 7 p.m.

Tomorrow

Lance Raymundo in a solo concert at Dish, ABS-CBN, Mother Ignacia Street, Quezon City; 8:30 p.m. Call 951-0493.

"Follies de Mwah!" at Club Mwah! Call 535-7943.

Wiseguys at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

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GALLERIA 632-9115/16

1 THE ISLAND • THX
2 THE ISLAND
3 MACHINIST
4 WEDDING CRASHERS
5 STEALTH
6 FANTASTIC FOUR
7 WAR OF THE WORLDS
8 IF ONLY
9 D' ANOTHERS
10 STEALTH

ERMITA 636-7809 to 12

1 STEALTH
2 IF ONLY
3 FANTASTIC FOUR
4 MACHINIST
5 WEDDING CRASHERS
6 THE ISLAND
7 D' ANOTHERS

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 THE ISLAND
2 SHANGHAI LILY
3 HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
4 WEDDING CRASHERS
5 STEALTH
6 IF ONLY
7 FANTASTIC FOUR
8 D' ANOTHERS

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

1 THE ISLAND
2 D' ANOTHERS
3 NEW POLICE STORY
4 MONSTER-IN-LAW

PIONEER 687-6378

1 STEALTH
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 THE ISLAND
4 WEDDING CRASHERS

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Prizes:
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NESCAFÉ Ice

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GALLERIA and ERMITA
from June 03 to July 31

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1 THE ISLAND
2 STEALTH
3 D' ANOTHERS
4 IN GOOD COMPANY

LIPA (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 IF ONLY
2 THE ISLAND
3 D' ANOTHERS
4 HERBIE: FULLY LOADED

DASMARINAS (046) 852-2126 (046) 416-4332

1 THE ISLAND
2 STEALTH
3 D' ANOTHERS
4 IF ONLY

ANGELES (045) 892-2348

1 STEALTH
2 THE ISLAND
3 D' ANOTHERS
4 MONSTER-IN-LAW

IMUS (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 STEALTH
2 D' ANOTHERS
3 THE ISLAND
4 CREEP

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-6270

1 EVIL DEAD
2 IF ONLY
3 D' ANOTHERS
4 FANTASTIC FOUR
5 STEALTH6 THE ISLAND

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453 (034) 441-0459

1 THE ISLAND
2 NEW POLICE STORY
3 D' ANOTHERS
4 STEALTH
5 HOTEL RWANDA
6 HERBIE: FULLY LOADED

ILOILO (033) 336-8070

1 STEALTH
2 THE ISLAND
3 D' ANOTHERS
4 NEW POLICE STORY

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AYALA GREENBELT

Swarovski Exhibit
July 23 to August 6, 2005
Ford Exhibit
July 22 to 24, 2005

GREENBELT 1 Onstage AYALA CENTER

"DON'T THINK" - A multi-media performance by Marge Enriquez (By Invitational Only)
Directed by Bart Guingona & Choreographed by Douglas Nieras
July 28,2005

Ayala MUSEUM

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Online registration at www.ayalamuseum.org

AYALA CINEMAS

Reserve your seats by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification call 729 7777

G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 EVIL DEAD	2 THE ISLAND	3 THE NEW POLICE STORY	4 FANTASTIC 4
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 IF ONLY	2 FANTASTIC 4	3 THX THE ISLAND 11:10, 2:00, 4:50, 7:40, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 WAR OF THE WORLDS	5 HERBIE: FULLY LOADED	6 THE ISLAND	7 THE ASSASSINATION OF RICHARD NIXON
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 IF ONLY 1:05, 3:15, 5:25, 7:35, 9:45	2 THE ISLAND 1:15, 4:00, 6:45,9:30		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX THE ISLAND 12:30, 3:15, 6:00, 8:45, 10:20 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX THE ISLAND 2:15, 5:00, 7:45, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 HERBIE: FULLY LOADED 1:50, 4:00, 6:10, 8:20, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 IF ONLY 2:35, 4:45, 6:55, 9:05, 11:15 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 FANTASTIC 4 1:45, 4:00, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX THE ISLAND	2 FANTASTIC 4		
	3 IF ONLY	4 THE ISLAND	5 HERBIE: FULLY LOADED	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 THE ISLAND	2 HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY	3 ALONE IN THE DARK	4 FANTASTIC 4

NOW SHOWING EXCLUSIVELY AT GLORIETTA 4 CINEMAS
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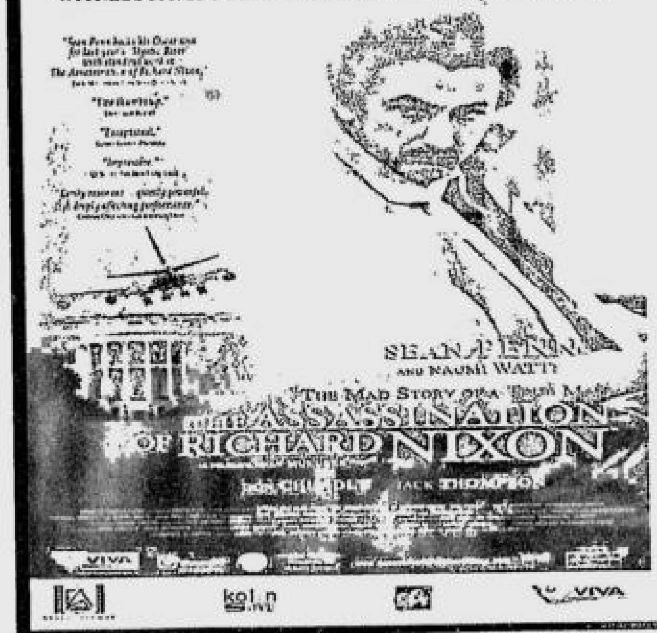
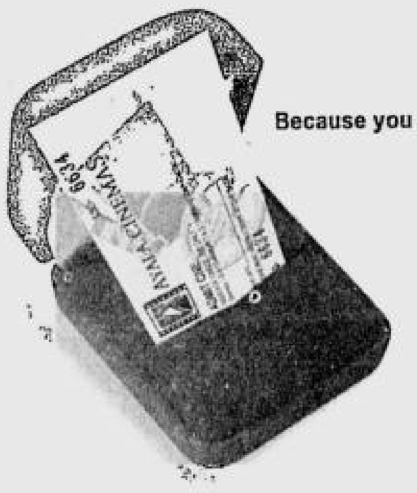
WITNESS A 9/11 STORY THAT ALMOST HAPPENED IN 1974.


SEAN PENN AND NAOMI WATTS
THE MAD STORY OF A TRUE MAN
THE ASSASSINATION OF RICHARD NIXON
VIVA



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Alabang Town Center -	842 2782; from 10am to 8pm
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② The Island
③ If Only
④ The New Police Story

Guaranteed Seats Cinemas: P90.00
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⑥ Fantastic 4
⑦ The Island

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A2-354, Series of 2005

Better than expected

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WHEN we helped conceptualize the Cinemalaya Independent Film Festival more than a year ago, we hoped that it would help new filmmakers get their break in short and/or full-length narrative filmmaking.

However, we worried that some of the finished films would be deficient in terms of quality or would be too egocentric to appeal to and involve viewers.

Well, the indie, digital festival has just ended its run at the Cultural Center of the Philippines and we can happily report that its output exceeded our expectations. Yes, some entries have fallen short of the mark, but a greater number have gratified us with their fresh and well-realized concepts and insights.

Viewers appear to agree with us as they enthusiastically supported the festival entries with their patronage. We trust that their support has heartened most of the festival's new filmmakers and motivated them to come up with even better follow-up films in the coming months.

We hope, too, that the very different film fare that viewers were exposed to during the festival has raised their standards and widened their range of viewing preferences, so they will develop into a loyal and supportive audience for local alternative cinema.

Finally, we trust that the mainstream movie people who viewed the festival entries experienced an epiphany about their own need to re-energize their film output, to avoid being unfavorably compared to the new filmmakers who have audaciously and impressively shown what Filipino movies should really be about.

Tarantino directs 'CSI' season finale

AT 9 p.m. tonight, the AXN channel is screening the season five finale of "CSI," directed by no less than Oscar awardee Quentin Tarantino. Make it a point to catch it.

The world's most successful crime series has delivered another season of surprises and high intrigue. In the season's finale, the CSI teammates must put aside their differences as they race against time to save a member of their group who has been abducted and buried alive in a coffin in an unknown location by a mysterious and sinister villain.

When it was first shown in the States, the Tarantino-directed finale episode notched up a total of 30.6 million viewers, making it the highest-rated TV show since the night of the "Survivor: Palau" premiere!

Produced by Jerry Bruckheimer, "CSI: Crime Scene Investigation" is one of the most innovative and successful one-hour dramas on primetime television, challenging viewers to solve crimes in tandem with the investigators, or to link pieces of clues before they do.

For his part, Tarantino brings to the finale episode, the great cachet he has with crime and action buffs, which he's earned with his edgy, trendsetting handling of such sleeper hits as "Reservoir Dogs," "Pulp Fiction" and the "Kill Bill" films.

The series five finale will be replayed on Thursday at 12 noon and on Sunday at 12 noon and 9 p.m.

Movies on TV

ON HBO, July 27 at 8:05 a.m., "My House in Umbria." 2:20 p.m., "Only You." 9 p.m., "The Boxer."

On Cinemax, July 27 at 5:30 p.m., "Julie Walking Home." 9 p.m., "The Bourne Identity."

New on Cartoon Network

A NEW series, "Pet Alien," premieres at 6 p.m. on Aug. 1 and will be shown every Monday thereafter. In the show, Tommy Cadle's teenage life becomes more exciting when aliens from outer space crash-land into his sleepy seaside town. Tommy befriends the aliens—Dinko, Gumpers, Flip, Swanky and Scuffy—and learns that, despite their myriad personalities, he can form a special friendship with each one of them.

Only . . .

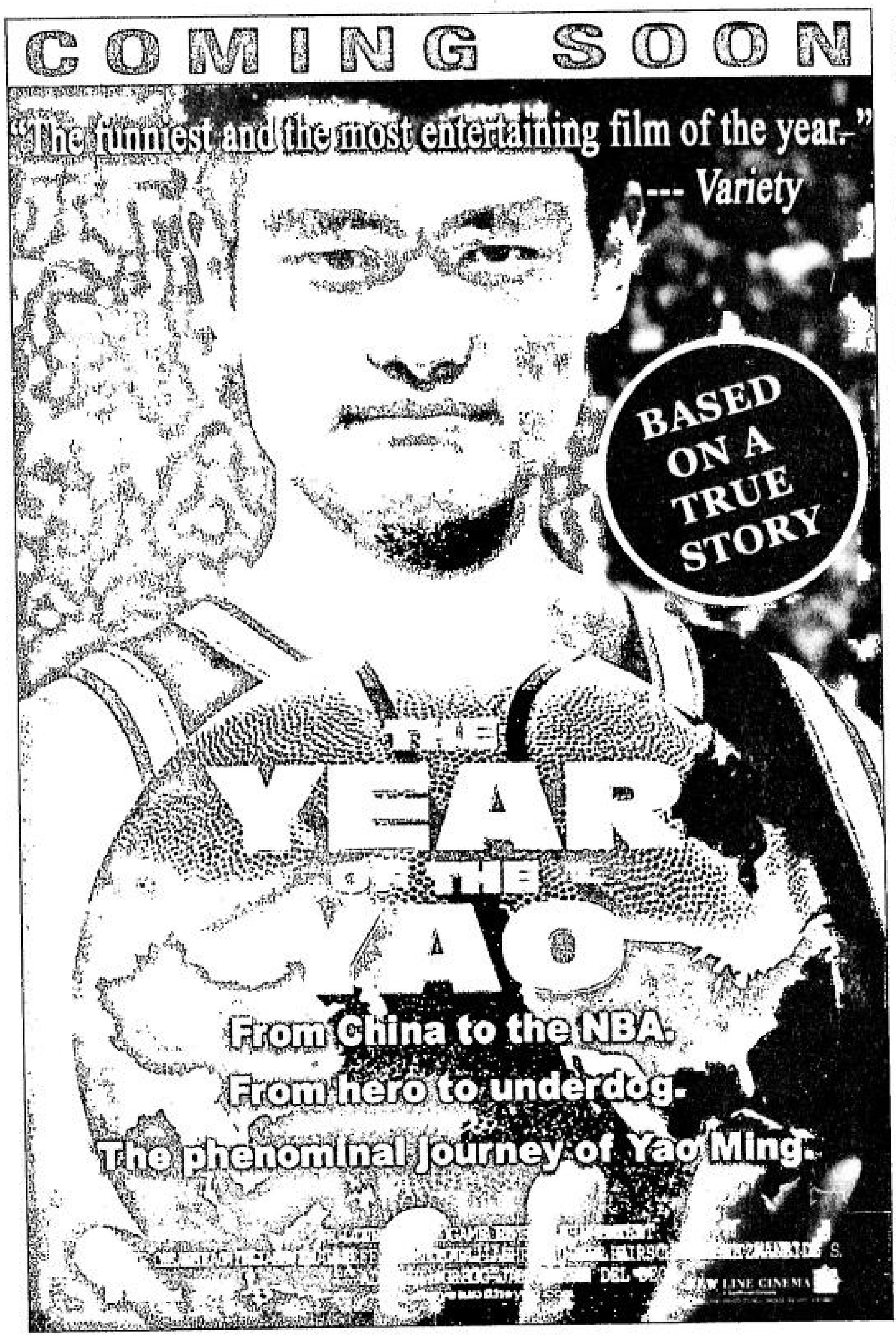
From page A2-1

grid," Galvante told INQUIRER Entertainment. "[This is because] we find that subject very sensitive. The shows will target families, housewives. There will be sitcoms, dramas, reality programs and celebrity talk shows."

But Galvante said not all Channel 11 shows would come from GMA 7. "There may be co-produced programs and block-time programs in the daytime, like canned shows, and news and public affair programs."

She explained that producing shows for Channel 11 was "tough." This was why, she said, the Kapuso network hired more people for the other channel's creative team. "The chairman (Felipe L. Gozon) ordered this because he wants to maintain GMA 7 standards and, at the same time, use the expertise of GMA 7 people."

Galvante said she would still head the channel's production department and use practically the same group of production experts producing shows for GMA. "This is not UHF," she said. "It will compete with other channels on free TV, so we have to program its shows accordingly."


COMING SOON
"The funniest and the most entertaining film of the year."
--- Variety
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THE YEAR OF THE YAO
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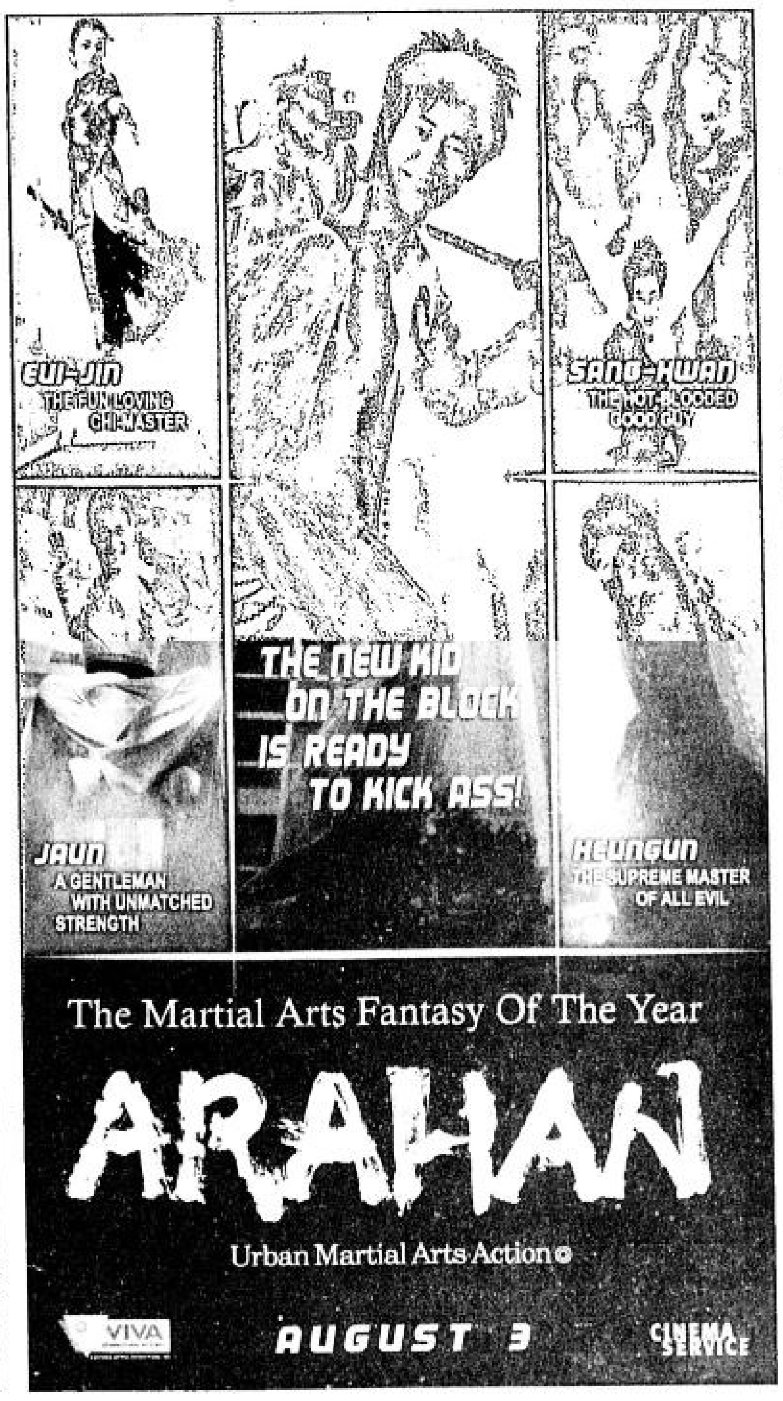
The phenominal journey of Yao Ming.
LINE CINEMA


EUI-JIN THE FUN LOVING CHI MASTER
SANG-HWAN THE HOT-BLOODED GOOD GUY
THE NEW KID ON THE BLOCK IS READY TO KICK ASS!
JAUN A GENTLEMAN WITH UNMATCHED STRENGTH
HEUNGUN THE SUPREME MASTER OF ALL EVIL
The Martial Arts Fantasy Of The Year
ARAHAN
Urban Martial Arts Action
VIVA
AUGUST 3
CINEMA SERVICE

SA AGOSTO 3, WAG KUKURAP, ETO NA ANG THRILL NA TRIP MO!!!
PUNTA TAYO SA DAIGDIG NG MGA PATAY ...MAKIKITA MO NA ANG DI NAKIKITA SA MUNDO NG MGA BUHAY!!

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THE EYE ...INFINITY
How about another-eye?
FORTISSIMOFILMS
applause pictures
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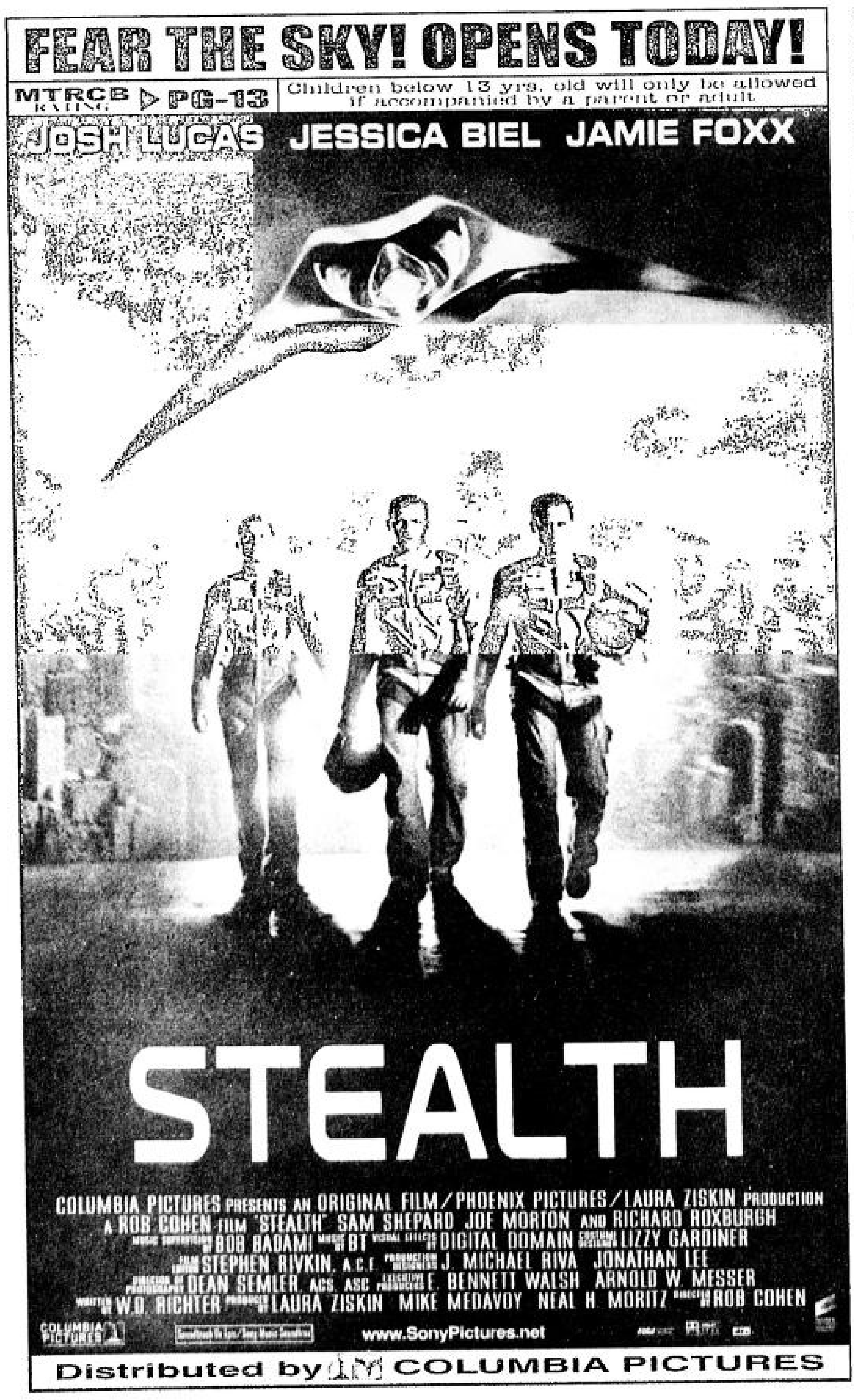
WARNING: The 'Rite Of Eight' presented in this film is the most powerful resort to make contact with the spiritual world. Psychics never doubt its authenticity so don't try it alone!!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Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
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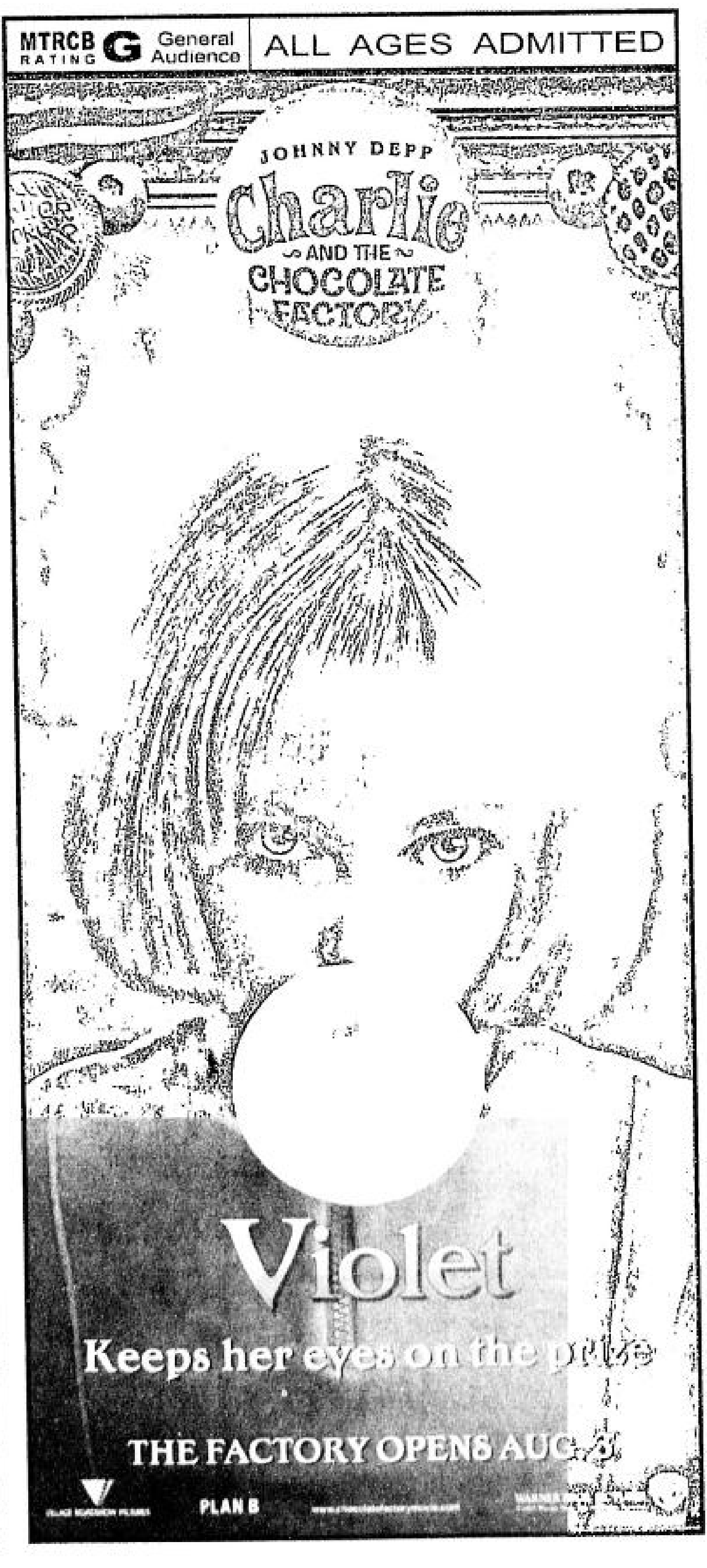
MTRCB RATING G General Audience
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Violet
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WEDNESDAY,
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

B1

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Growth in imports slowed down in May

INDICATORS

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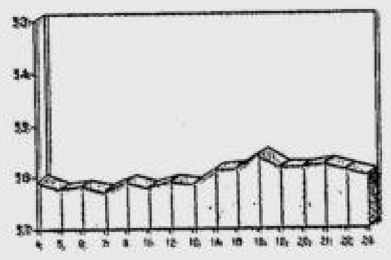


PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱56 = $1
As of 5 p.m., July 26, 2005

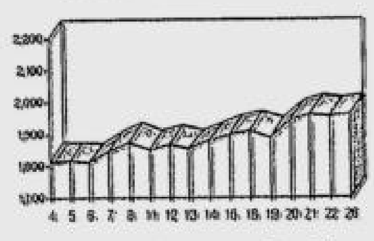
¥111.89 = $1
As of 3 p.m., July 26, 2005

GOLD: $424.40-424.90
per ounce Hong Kong, July 25, 2005

STOCK MARKET

Shares rise in cautious trade

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

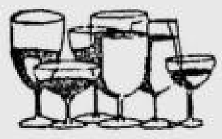
SHARE prices closed 0.27 percent higher yesterday in cautious trade, with investors watching political developments as embattled President Macapagal-Arroyo struggles to hold on to power, dealers said.

They said investors were relieved that Ms Arroyo's much-awaited State of the Nation Address on Monday passed off without trouble and heartened by her pledge to continue her economic reform program "whatever the political cost."

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index rose 5.18 points to 1,959.58 after trading between 1,952.02 to 1,966.50 points. Volume was 376 million shares worth P937.23 million.

The broader all-shares index was up 1.25 points at 1,180.51. Gainers led losers 38 to 25, with 47 stocks unchanged. *AFP*

WHAT'S INSIDE



Mike's golf connect /B3

Sic transit gloria mundi /B5

Electronics shipments slip 5.8% to $1.39B

By Michelle V. Remo

THE COUNTRY'S imports slowed down on a month-on-month basis to $3.37 billion in May, as global demand especially for electronics continued to shrink due to high oil prices.

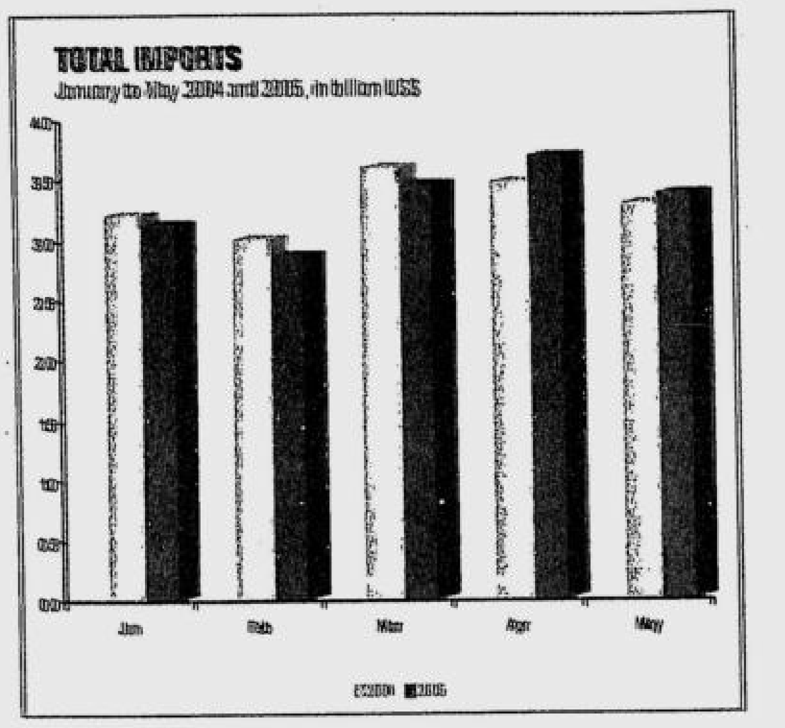
The May imports figure reflected a 5.8-percent drop from the $3.68 billion recorded in April. But the latest import data was 2.7 percent better than the $3.28 billion posted during the same month last year.

Analysts said the relatively low import figure for May was an indication companies were simply disposing of their inventory rather than building it up. They said the May figure confirmed earlier projections that there would be an economic growth slowdown globally this year.

"People are taking a wait-and-see attitude due to the movement of oil prices," said Jonathan Ravelas, market

GROWTH/ B2

TOTAL IMPORTS
January to May 2004 and 2005, in billion US$



LAUNCHING IN 2006

Bayantel sets mobile network

By Clarissa S. Batino

BAYAN Telecommunications Inc. said it would roll out by next year a unique mobile phone network where coverage would be limited to a certain service area and entail less than $100 million in investments.

Tunde Fafunwa, Bayantel chief consultant said the company was looking to launch by 2006 a wireless local loop or a push-to-talk wireless telephone operations to complement its fixed-line business.

"Most people's concept of a cellular service is a nationwide GSM. It doesn't have to be like that for us," he said.

GSM or global system for mobile, which is used by major players like Smart Communications Inc. and Globe Telecom Inc., will mean investments of about $400 million.

Fafunwa said Bayantel's improving finances would allow it to finance any new venture internally. Still under rehabilitation, the Lopez company cannot borrow from banks.

He said the company's second-quarter results were ahead of targets. The company will announce its April-to-June numbers on Thursday. Bayantel is a unit of Benpres Holdings Corp.

"All our plans are continuing, if not accelerating, because of our results," he noted.

The Lopez phone company appears to have been prod-

BAYANTEL/ B4

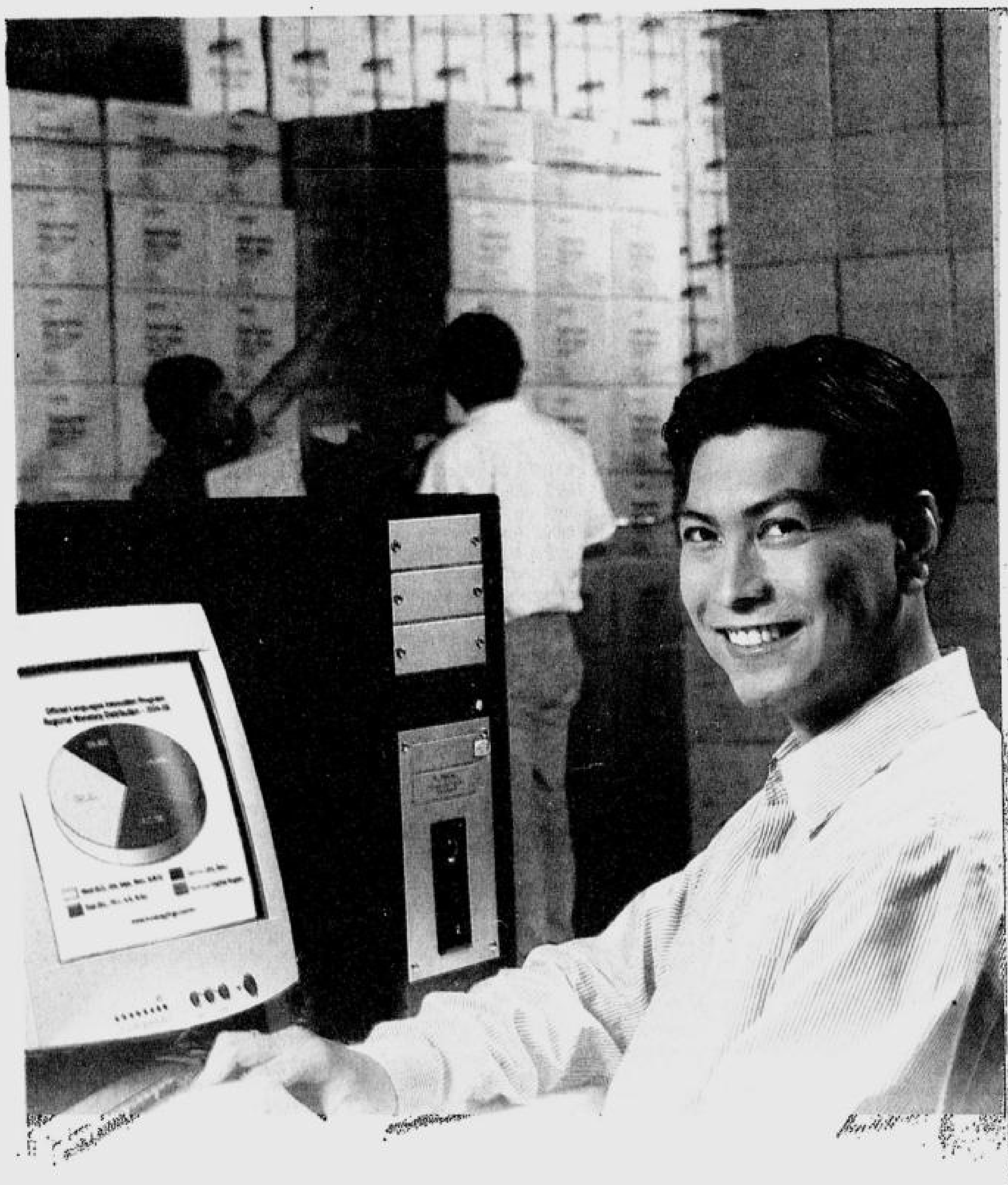
91-day T-bill rate inches up to 5.632%

THE BELLWETHER 91-day treasury bill rate rose by 18 basis points to 5.632 percent yesterday, showing signs of correction from last week's steep decline, while other treasury rates continued to decline as the market remained awash with cash.

The 182- and the 364-day rates fell by 3 and 6.5 basis points, respectively. All maturities were oversubscribed, with total volume of bids reaching P14.13 billion compared with the government's offering of only P6 billion.

"Despite the increase in the reserve requirement on banks, volume was high because there is much liquidity in the market. The 91-day T-bill rate only increased because it dropped excessively last week, and the mar-

91-DAY/ B4



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[illegible] For more details please call [illegible]

Sic transit gloria mundi

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

NO. This has nothing to do with the President being sick in her helicopter going to the Sona on Monday. It is Latin for "Thus passeth the glory of the world" and is usually used at the inauguration of a new Pope. It comes from a Latin-English poem by Emily Dickinson. I bet I fooled 99 percent of my readers.

Two weeks ago, I wrote an article titled "Moving to a Parliamentary System," but for some reason, it was not posted on INQ7.net. Last week, I had a very unpleasant experience and was too ill to write. Even now, I have not fully recovered so this will be a short article.

I was sitting by the Bloomberg collecting international news for my newsletter when the computer appeared to topple on to the floor and the room turned upside down. It was so frightening that I yelled "earthquake" and everyone thought it was one of my jokes. But it threw me completely, I felt dizzy and the floor felt as if it was vibrating.

On Sunday morning, I was reading the newspapers when the same thing happened again. I sent my daughter downstairs to get the blood pressure monitor and my blood pressure was a normal 120/70. I decided it must be my ears as I had a similar problem 10 years ago.

Last Saturday, I went to the hospital that had just discharged 300 workers, and there was a picket line. As I was outside the Ear, Nose and Throat Department, my way was blocked by a nose picket. I assured him that I was not a reporter but a patient.

The ear doctor runs a hearing aid clinic called "Until deaf us do part." I walked in and said bright, "Good morning, Doctor." "What?" he said, "I can't hear you. I am wearing an earwig." He looked at my U-station tubes but found nothing except 3 unexploded bombs. "There's nothing ear," he said, so I went to see my own doctor who is a neurologist or a urologist, I forget which.

He is probably a neurologist because he always eats seizure salad for lunch. I asked him for some pills to stop me feeling dizzy, perhaps an aphrodizziac. I told him straight, "I did not come all the way to the Orient just to get disoriented." After some tests, he said that I had experienced two transient ischemic episodes, which is not good.

* * *

IT WAS a strange week in the stock market. After a weak start, the Phisix surged 55 points as the opposition filed a motion to impeach GMA. On Thursday, the degree of risk reached 97 and I sent out a SELL signal of selected stocks. I warned that the imminence of the Sona posed some uncertainly but the President's speech was short and well delivered but added nothing new.

She said it was time to move to a Federal Parliamentary system, but she did not give any time frame and would leave it to a constituent assembly. She was enthusiastically applauded by JDV, who was a cheerleader in his younger days, but was utterly ignored by Senator Drilon. The opposition boycotted the Sona, which does them no good, as their dissenting opinion was not heard afterwards on TV.

Although she has given tacit approval to the House and to the Senate, there are still a number who are opposed to it or have yet to be convinced that it is a good move. The opposition does not yet have enough support to impeach her and if the lawmakers are going to divide their time and their numbers between moving to a Parliamentary system, impeaching GMA and passing fiscal reforms, I think that nothing will get done. The French have a saying, "Plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose," which means the more things change, the more they remain the same.

An unexpected event was the revaluation of the yuan from 8.1 to 8.3 to the US dollar. This came out of the blue and is due to internal inflationary pressure in China and not because President Bush and John Snow told them to do so. The move was welcomed by almost all countries, but the amount of 2 percent is small to make much difference. An imported article costing P50 will cost P51, providing the peso does not appreciate and cancel it out.

I think the vendors will absorb this tiny increase. It makes our exports to China slightly cheaper but not enough to make a worthwhile difference. Malaysia followed immediately by letting the ringgit move in a controlled float and it rose 0.5 percent on the first day.

Fed Chair Greenspan gave an upbeat account of the US economy and this resulted in the Nasdaq hitting a 4-year high. He also said there was still some inflationary pressures and that the FED will continue raising interest rates. Sadly, he will retire in December 2005.

mrbearbull@hotmail.com

Growth in imports slowed down in May

From page B1

strategist at Banco de Oro Universal Bank. The analyst explained that people were keeping from spending too much in anticipation of further increases in oil prices, which will have to eat on their income.

Documents from the National Statistics Office showed that the Philippines' electronics imports shrank by 5.8 percent month-on-month and 1.7 percent year-on-year in May to only $1.39 billion. Import figure for electronics, most of which are raw materials, is closely monitored because it gives a preview of how much the Philippines will earn from the export of electronics, the country's top dollar earner.

The May import figure brought the country's five-month import data to $16.44 billion, or 0.2 percent lower than the $16.48 billion recorded during the same period last year.

The latest imports data also resulted in a trade deficit of $398 million in the first five months of the year, lower than the year-ago figure of $1.06 billion.

Following electronics, the NSO reported that mineral fuels, lubricants and related products were the country's second biggest imports for May. Imports of these products amounted to $493.92 million, representing a 35.6-percent growth over the previous year's $364.38 million because of increasing oil prices.

Other top imports were industrial machinery and equipment ($128.91 million), transport equipment ($116.65 million), cereals ($114.69 million), iron and steel (108.48 million); textile and yarn ($92.29 million), chemicals ($76.51 million), plastics ($71.16 million), and telecommunication equipment ($57.5 million).

Meantime, output of the manufacturing sector for the month of May grew 12.9 percent year-on-year in terms of value and 5.4 percent in terms of volume due to heightened production of various sectors, the National Statistics Office reported yesterday.

On a month-on-month basis, the Value of Production Index and the Volume of Production Index also rose by 1.8 percent and 3.6 percent, respectively.

The NSO said manufacturing industries that recorded an increase in value and volume of production during the month were furniture and fixtures, transport equipment, basic metals, textile, tobacco, chemical products, non-metallic mineral products, wood and wood products, publishing and printing, and basic metals, and leather products.

Net sales of the manufacturing sector grew year-on-year by 10.5 percent in terms of value and one percent in terms of volume, the NSO also reported.

Capacity utilization of manufacturing firms slightly improved in May to 80.1 percent compared with the 80 percent in April, the NSO added.

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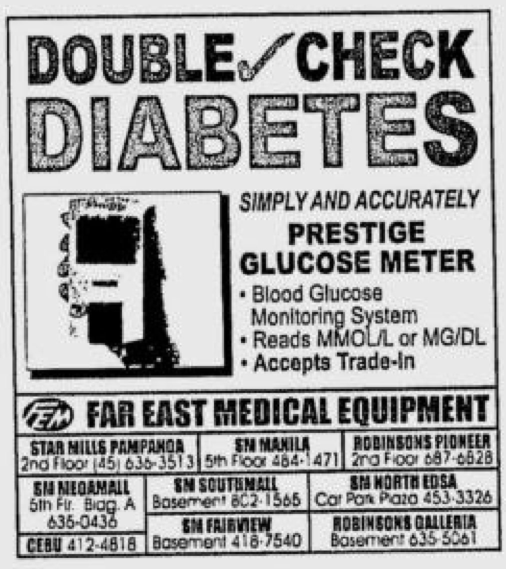
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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of July 26, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	29.5	29.5	29	29	31,400
Bank of the Phil. Islands	49.5	49.5	48	49	1,029,600
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	500
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	47.5	48	47	48	236,400
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	28	28	27.5	28	503,100
Philippine National Bank	48	48	46	47	111,900
Phil. Savings Bank	32.5	32.5	32.5	32.5	600
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12.75	12.75	12	12	15,000
Security Bank Corp.	26.5	28	26.5	27.5	186,900
Union Bank of the Phil.	29	29	29	29	17,700
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Filipino Fund Inc.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	13,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	2775	2775	2775	2775	60
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1940	1940	1940	1940	160
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	12.5	12.5	12.25	12.25	29,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1	1.02	1	1.02	966,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	830	835	820	820	11,270
Ipeople Inc.	3.1	3.1	3	3	234,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.049	0.05	0.048	0.049	4,500,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	1,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.65	2.7	2.6	2.65	1,631,000
Transpacific Broadcast	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	25,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1600	1605	1580	1585	141,570
Philweb Corp.	0.017	0.017	0.016	0.017	4,500,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	14.25	14.5	14.25	14.5	11,300
Manila Electric Co. B	24	24	23.75	23.75	18,100
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.7	6.8	6.6	6.6	1,210,000
Petron Corp.	3.15	3.35	3.15	3.25	15,373,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.72	30,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7.8	8	7.8	8	1,144,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.04	32,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	52,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.3	3.45	3.3	3.45	70,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	30	30	29.5	30	80,100
Pancake House, Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	50,000
San Miguel Corp. A	64.5	66.5	64.5	66.5	95,100
San Miguel Corp. B	98	103	98	101	148,400
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0075	0.008	0.0075	0.008	60,000,000
Ayala Corp.	320	322.5	315	315	101,220
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.4	0.46	0.4	0.46	80,200,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.85	4.85	4.85	4.85	348,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.023	1,000,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2	2	2	2	1,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	1,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.72	0.74	0.72	0.74	260,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	15,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.04	6,886,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	400,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.23	0.245	0.23	0.245	450,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.44	2.55	2.44	2.5	5,575,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	7,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	6.8	6.8	6.7	6.7	174,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	43	45	43	45	1,592,700
Global Equities Inc.	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	500,000
Ionics Inc.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	10,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	50,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	5,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.34	1.34	1.3	1.32	1,630,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	4,270,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	100,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1	1	1	1	160,000
Solid Group, Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	50,000
SM Investments Corp.	218	219	215	219	563,100
South China Resources Inc.	0.64	0.64	0.63	0.63	290,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.165	0.165	0.16	0.16	600,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	180,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	410,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	31,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.08	0.1	0.08	0.1	700,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.95	0.95	0.94	0.94	1,670,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.76	0.76	0.75	0.75	50,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.28	1.4	1.26	1.38	19,950,000
Manila Jockey Club	3	3	3	3	20,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	12.25	12.25	12	12	209,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series M	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	11	11	11	11	2,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	8,200
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	7.3	7.3	7.3	7.3	11,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	8.1	8.2	8	8	18,965,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	40,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.88	0.88	0.88	0.88	120,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.195	0.205	0.195	0.2	5,310,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	30,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.34	3,220,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.42	1.44	2,438,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.12	0.12	0.115	0.115	380,000
SM Development Corp.	1.42	1.42	1.42	1.42	54,000
SM Prime Holdings, Inc.	7.3	7.4	7.3	7.4	4,298,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co., Inc. A	1	1.06	1	1	150,000
Apex Mining Co., Inc.B	0.9	1.1	0.9	1.06	990,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	28,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	4.95	5	4.9	4.9	57,000
Benguet Corp. A	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.2	8,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	150,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	1,680,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	11,300,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.021	0.021	0.02	0.02	18,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	90,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.92	0.92	0.89	0.89	670,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	29	29.5	28.5	28.5	43,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	49,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	3,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	10,000
Pacifica	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	2,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.95	3.15	2.95	3.1	518,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.135	0.14	2,530,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	50,000

DISCLOSURES

PETRON Corp. posted a net income of P2.31 billion in the first half of 2005, which is 70 percent higher than the P1.36-billion income in the same period last year. It also elected as directors Nicasio Alcantara, Khalid Al-Faddagh, Khalid Al-Buainain, Bernardino Abes, Herminio Aquino, Basil Abul-Hamayel, Alberto Pedrosa, Ahmad Al-Khowaiter, Jose Luis Yulo Jr. and Douhan Al-Douhan. The company reappointed Sycip, Gorres and Velayo as independent auditor.

***

ABOITIZ Transport System Corp. posted revenues of P2.6 billion in the second quarter of 2005, a 5-percent increase over the same period last year.

***

CITY & Land Developers Inc. reported sales of P266 million for the first half of this year, which is 12.45 percent higher than that of the first half of 2004.

***

PHILIPPINE Savings Bank president Pascual Garcia III bought on July 21 3,000 common shares at P32 per share, and 1,200 common shares at P32.50 per share.

***

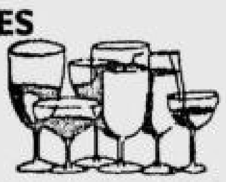
SWIFT Foods Inc.'s annual stockholders' meeting was moved from July 29 to Sept. 1, 2:30 p.m., at the Auditorium, RFM Corporate Center, Pioneer corner Sheridan Sts., Mandaluyong City. Stockholders of record as of Aug. 8 will be entitled to vote at the meeting. ***Compiled by Cyril L. Bonabente, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

July 26, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.828638	1.000000	55.5530
Japan	Yen	0.007432	0.008969	0.4983
United Kingdom	Pound	1.447464	1.746800	97.0400
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.106595	0.128639	7.1463
Switzerland	Franc	0.640172	0.772559	42.9180
Canada	Dollar	0.680159	0.820816	45.5988
Singapore	Dollar	0.499119	0.602337	33.4616
Australia	Dollar	0.632017	0.762718	42.3713
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.198095	2.652661	147.3633
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.220958	0.266652	14.8133
Brunei	Dollar	0.497620	0.600528	33.3611
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000102	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.020064	0.024213	1.3451
UAE	Dirham	0.225639	0.272301	15.1271
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.206800	67.0414
Argentina	Peso	0.289228	0.349040	19.3902
Brazil	Real	0.342653	0.413514	22.9719
Denmark	Kroner	0.134064	0.161789	8.9879
India	Rupee	0.019071	0.023015	1.2786
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.221029	0.266738	14.8181
Mexico	New Peso	0.077154	0.093110	5.1725
New Zealand	Dollar	0.565893	0.682920	37.9383
Norway	Kroner	0.126600	0.152781	8.4874
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013904	0.016779	0.9321
South Africa	Rand	0.124883	0.150709	8.3723
Korea	Won	0.000818	0.000987	0.0548
Sweden	Kroner	0.106255	0.128228	7.1235
Syria	Pound	0.015963	0.019264	1.0702
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.026144	0.031551	1.7528

Mike's golf connect

COCKTALES



Victor C. Agustin

FIRST Gentleman Mike Arroyo may be hiding from the media and everyone else, but certainly not from Enrique "Ricky" Razon Jr., chair-president of the publicly listed International Container Terminal Services Inc.

Razon was seen last week playing golf with the elusive "FG" at the Green Hills Country Club in Millbrae, California, along with Bay Area residents Dan Almeda and banker Gerry Siy.

Razon, like Endika Aboitiz a key member of the GMA Castilaloy Cabinet, merely laughed when asked about the golf rendezvous. The port services king happens to be also the majority owner of The Country Club, the membership-by-invitation-only golf club in Canlubang, Laguna, where Arroyo was a frequent player in the pre-"Hello Garci" days.

An ABS-CBN news crew hot on the Arroyo trail failed to film his arrival at the San Francisco airport after Philippine consulate officials allegedly whisked off "FG" through a VIP exit.

Citing unnamed San Francisco airport personnel, ABS-CBN North America news bureau chief Regina Reyes said Arroyo was even lugging a golf bag when he arrived earlier this month to start his US "exile."

Paeng's spirited look

RECENTLY retired Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura may have lost weight due to his Stanford regimen, but certainly not his anime, according to someone who recently saw him. He even looks younger now, with his lean frame and new Beatle-like top.

From his base in Palo Alto, Buenaventura, who has been quite away for some time now, keeps current on Philippine affairs through the Internet, the trusty cell phone and occasional visitors from Manila.

Though he is being told by doctors to avoid crowds, the former Citibanker-PCIBanker does not mind, actually appears happy, making a quick dash to an In N Out hamburger store.

Wife and painter Marivic Rufino drives the governor around in a mini-van, much like the proverbial soccer mom.

It should be interesting to hear Buenaventura's testimony—quite passionate, if a private preview is any indication—in the event he is summoned as an expert witness in the boardroom battle at Equitable PCI Bank, especially as to how the Gos financed their Equitable Bank's takeover of the much bigger PCI Bank during the Erap padrino-driven days.

Gokongwei game plan

JOHN Gokongwei's Cebu Pacific TV advertisements may be sniping at Lucio Tan's Philippine Airlines. But Gokongwei almost always takes PAL whenever he flies to San Francisco.

"It's the fastest" to the Bay Area, said Gokongwei, who is now in his favorite foreign city to, again in his own words, "recharge (his) batteries."

Noting that PAL's trans-Pacific passenger load is still heavy despite the record high oil prices, the taipan appears quite keen to start his airline's Manila-San Francisco/Los Angeles flights.

Saying Cebu Pacific has already secured its US traffic rights, Gokongwei hinted that the second Philippine flag carrier could start its probably thrice-a-week flight to the West Coast by Christmas 2006, when the new Airbuses it ordered shall have been delivered.

In the meantime, Mr. John is treating Mrs. John to some good old-fashioned sightseeing to the Grand Canyon and frequent forays to San Francisco Chinatown restaurants.

Heard through the grapevine

EX-CDCP boss Rodolfo Cuenca has put his Nob Hill house in San Francisco on the block to finance his long drawn-out court battle with taipan Henry Sy and Development Bank of the Philippines.

Cuenca claims his creditor DBP, on orders of then Finance Secretary Jesus Estanislao, illegally sold his former Pines Hotel property to the SM Group during the early Cory years.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

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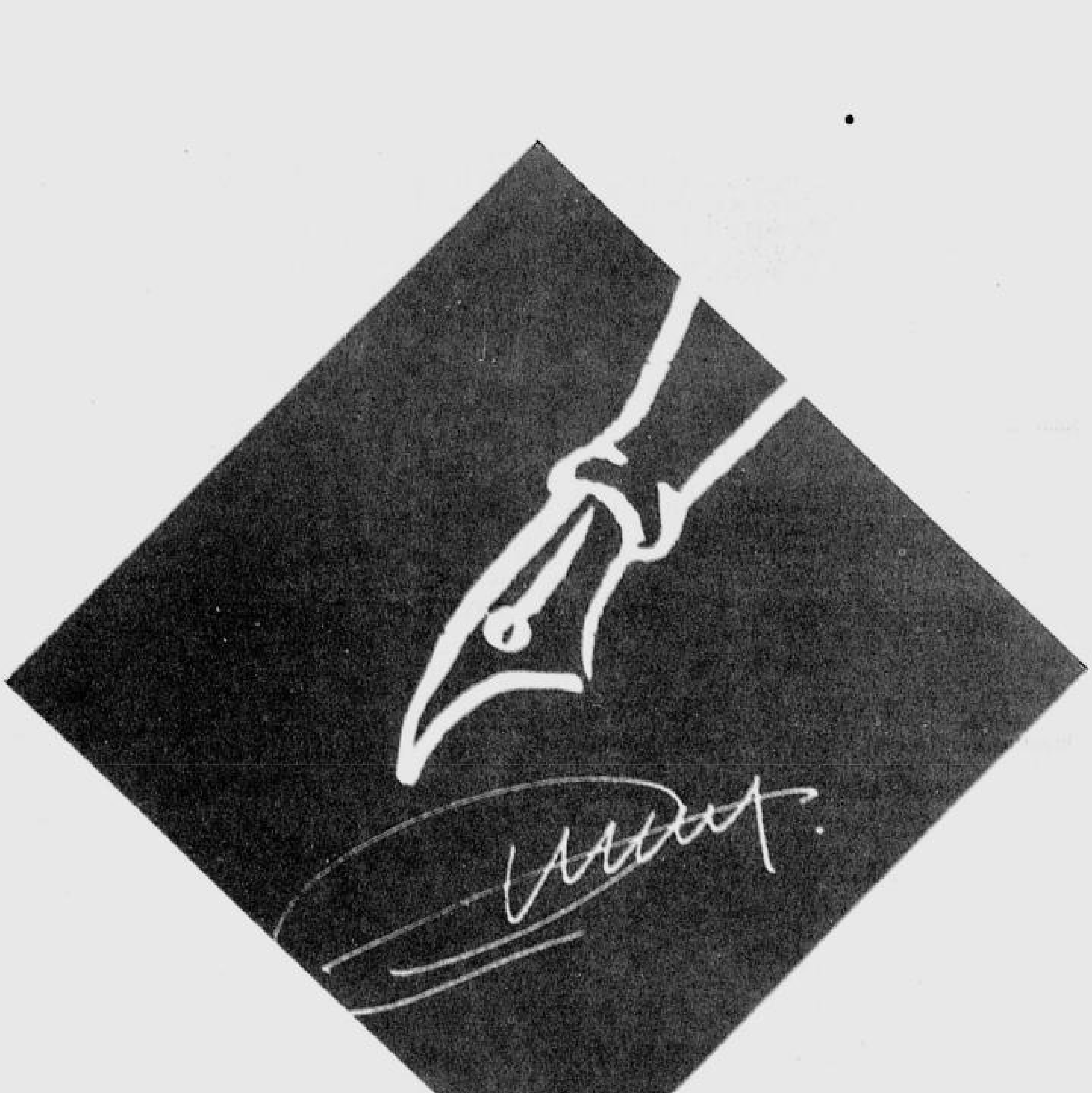

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Sun Life Financial

Gov't seen to earn P8B from sale of PNB stake

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE GOVERNMENT stands to generate about P8 billion from the sale of its stake in Philippine National Bank even if no bidder shows up during the Aug. 12 auction.

The government and tobacco magnate Lucio Tan jointly own 67 percent of the bank.

"When Lucio Tan accepted the floor price, he became obligated to buy it at P43 per share in the event of a failed bidding," said a finance official privy to the auction process.

The bidding is the biggest privatization initiative of the government since 1997 when it sold to Hong Kong's First Pacific group the right to develop the sprawling Fort Bonifacio military camp in Taguig.

The PNB stake placed on the block consisted of shares and warrants held in escrow by US investment bank JP Morgan Chase since 2002 when Tan and the government signed the joint sale agreement.

Tan's participation in the bidding is one of the primary requisites for the privatization to ensure its success. As the government's single biggest private partner in PNB, Tan is also given the right to match the highest bid.

But assuming that Tan withdraws from the bidding, he would have to waive the right to match the highest offer.

"He will have to participate in the bidding for the right to match to become operative," the source said.

The source explained that Tan would be subjected to the same payment terms as the winning bidder should he decide to exercise his right to match.

At least 10 groups have expressed interest in the bidding for a controlling stake in PNB, including the Ayalas' Bank of the Philippine Islands, the country's second largest bank and Union Bank of the Philippines.

The source said four groups have begun their due diligence study on the bank, which should be completed by Aug. 10.

Once the country's biggest bank controlling 25 percent of the banking system's assets, PNB is now ranked number six with total assets of about P219 billion as of the first quarter.

"PNB's ace is its strong niche in OFW (overseas Filipino workers) remittances," said CLSA Securities Philippines head of research Alfred Dy. "In fact, around 22 percent of the over $8 billion OFW remittances per annum pass through PNB.

"Nonetheless, net NPLs (non-performing loans) remain awfully high at P28 billion, translating to NPL ratio of 39 percent at yearend 2004."

Lucio Tan is not expected to give up control of PNB easily.

The taipan remains one of the wealthiest individuals in the Philippines, with a vast empire, including his flagship Fortune Tobacco, Asia Brewery, Philippine Airlines, Foremost Farms and Allied Bank.

"He has reportedly given up on acquiring Del Monte Pacific," Dy said. "As such, he may be liquid enough to do an acquisition in the banking industry."

RENT IS UP...
I HAVEN'T RECOVERED YET FROM LAST YEAR!
ZZZ...
RUINES

Local tin can makers to raise prices by 16¢/can

By Ronnel W. Domingo

LOCAL tin can makers yesterday said they would raise the price of their products by 5 percent on Aug. 1.

The increase in rate is expected to trigger a hike in the prices of canned meat and fish.

The current can price of P3.30 apiece at best reflected the rate of almost a year ago.

The 5-percent hike would jack up prices of tin cans by 16 centavos apiece to P3.46 each.

Henry A. Tañedo, president of the Tin Can Manufacturer's Association of the Philippines Inc., told Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila in a letter that the international prices of tin has reached $1,240 per metric ton this month.

TCMAPI data show that world prices have risen steadily from $480 a ton in 2002 to $1,100 a ton in October 2004.

"The most recent price increase meant an additional $25 a ton for the third quarter of 2005," Tañedo said, adding that there were no indications that prices would become stable for the rest of the year.

According to the Philippine Association of Meat Processors Inc., the announced increase would translate to a hike of 1.5 percent in the prices of canned meat, and 2.5 percent for canned fish.

For example, canned meat and canned fish priced at P10 each would cost an additional 15 centavos and 25 centavos, respectively.

Earlier, the Department of Trade and Industry had asked local tin can makers to hold off full price adjustments in an effort to moderate inflation.

As a result, tin can makers have not fully recovered from the increases in tin plate costs, Tañedo said.

TCMAPI had made a similar move last January when it increased the price by 16 centavos.

People want price control mechanism in place

By Christine A. Gaylican

FILIPINO consumers reeling from high prices of basic commodities and the almost weekly increases in oil prices want the government to put in place a mechanism that would control the prices of goods.

In a nationwide survey conducted by the Ibon Databank, 63 percent of 1,379 respondents said that the government should establish a price control mechanism, while 19.6 percent said the government should set up retail outlets to sell basic goods at low prices.

About 16 percent of respondents said the government should again consider subsidies on basic necessities such as rice.

According to the Ibon Databank, high prices have pushed the daily cost of living for a family of six in the National Capital Region to P620.01 as of May 2005. This amount is more than double the daily minimum wage of P325 (P275 legislated, plus P50 cost-of-living allowance).

Also, 45 percent of respondents called for a return to regulation of the oil industry as the answer to the constant rounds of oil price hikes, 18.8 percent said government should amend the oil deregulation law, and 14.5 percent said government should resort to centralized procurement of oil products.

Bayantel . . .

From page B1

ded into action by threats from the National Telecommunications Commission that its unused frequencies would be recalled since it had not gone into the cellular business.

"What we are looking at is one that would cost less than $100 million. By 2006, we plan to launch our own cellular business," Fafunwa said.

"Our serious intent to pursue such (mobile phone) plans is borne by the fact that we have complied with all regulations and fees required to maintain our 'right' to operate and deliver said service," Fafunwa added.

91-day T-bill . . .

From page B1

ket simply corrected it," National Treasurer Omar Cruz said in a briefing after the auctions.

The 91-day rate of 5.452 percent last week reflected a 72.1-basis-point drop from the previous week's 6.173 percent. (One percentage point is equivalent to 100 basis points.)

Cruz said the high level of liquidity in the market was coupled with its positive sentiment over the government's fiscal situation, which he described as "pretty healthy" despite the suspension of the implementation of the Expanded Value-Added Tax Law.

The national treasurer said liquidity and improving budget position of the government were enough to ease concerns on the lingering troubles on the political front.

Although threats on political stability abound prior to the State of the Nation Address of President Macapagal-Arroyo last Monday, the day ended peacefully.

Cruz said interest rates on government securities were not expected to spike as the government has convinced the market that it was on track to fulfill its fiscal targets no matter what happens on the political side. *Michelle V. Remo*

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CORPORATION FINANCE DEPARTMENT

IN THE MATTER OF THE :
FIRST METRO SAVE AND LEARN : Registration of Securities
FIXED INCOME FUND, INC. :
Registrant

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that on June 22, 2005, a sworn registration statement was filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission for and on behalf of FIRST METRO SAVE AND LEARN FIXED INCOME FUND, INC. for the registration of its entire authorized capital stock of Two Hundred Million (200,000,000) common shares with the par value of P1.00 each, or an aggregate value of Two Hundred Million Pesos (P200,000,000.00).

According to the papers/documents presented, the following persons are the officers/directors of the corporation.

NAME	POSITION
Victor C. Macalincag	Chairman
Atty. Antonio M. Bernardo	Director
Bro. Manuel V. de Leon, FMS	Director
Gloria C. Garrovillo	Director
Edwin B. Valeroso	Director
Danilo G. Olondriz	Chief Financial Officer
Atty. Nimfa B. Pastrana	Corporate Secretary

Said registration statement and other papers/documents attached thereto are open to inspection by interested parties during business hours and copies thereof, photostatic or otherwise, shall be furnished to every party at such reasonable fees as the Commission may prescribe.

JUSTINA F. CALLANGAN
Director

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
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SEC Bldg., EDSA, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila

CORPORATION FINANCE DEPARTMENT

IN THE MATTER OF THE :
FIRST METRO SAVE AND LEARN : Registration of Securities
EQUITY FUND, INC. :
Registrant

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that on June 22, 2005, a sworn registration statement was filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission for and on behalf of FIRST METRO SAVE AND LEARN EQUITY FUND, INC. for the registration of its entire authorized capital stock of One Hundred Million (100,000,000) common shares with the par value of P1.00 each, or an aggregate value of One Hundred Million Pesos (P100,000,000.00).

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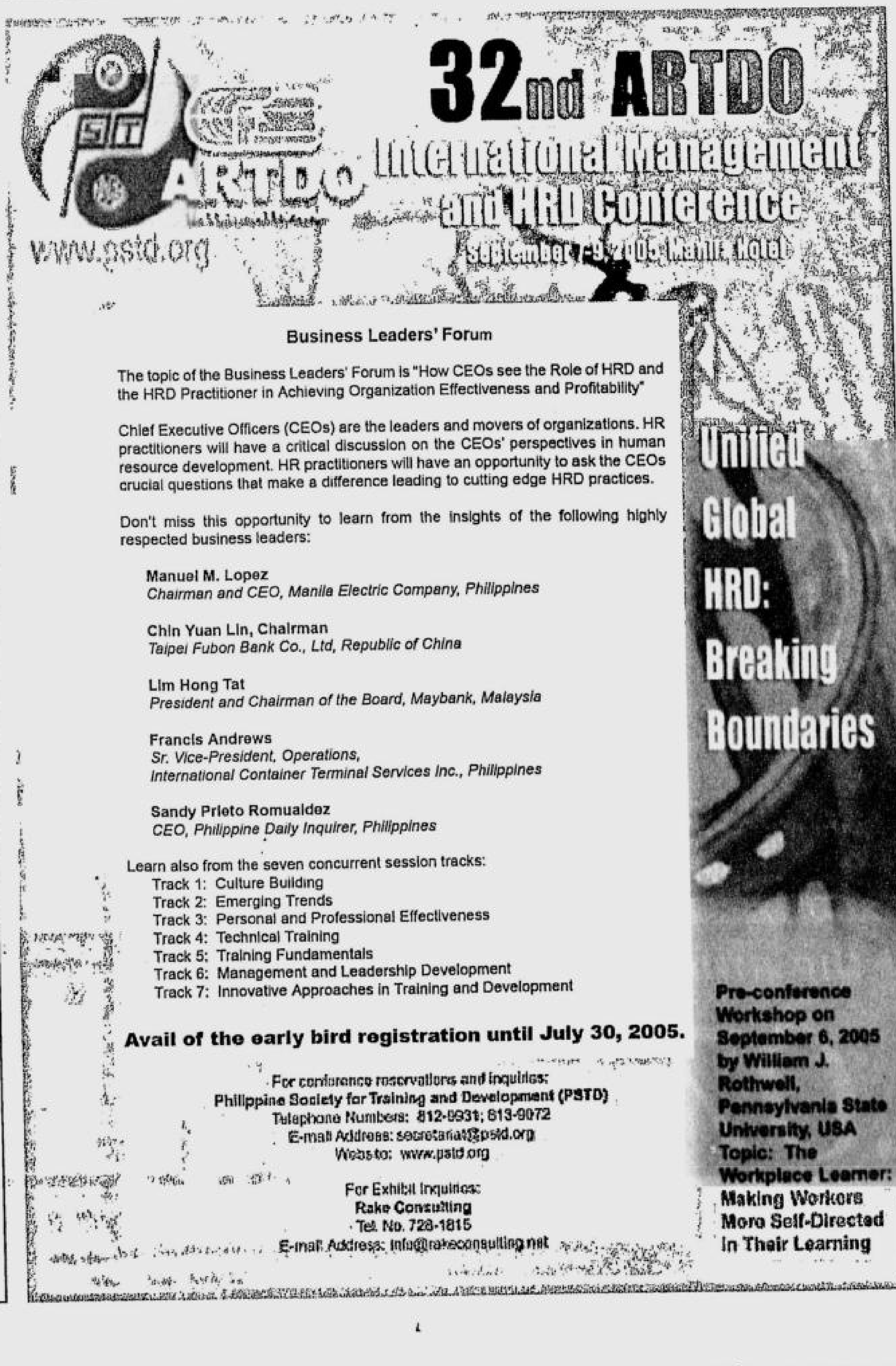
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Creation of IPR courts proposed

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MEETING OF THE MINDS
Outgoing US Ambassador to the Philippines Francis Ricciardone and Ayala Corp. president and CEO Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II signed an agreement, wherein the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and Innove Communications Inc. of the Ayalas will work on accelerating the effective use of computers and Internet technology in public high schools in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and neighboring conflict-affected areas in Mindanao (CAAM).

As gov't works on RP removal from US watchlist of violators

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE INTELLECTUAL Property Office yesterday said it had proposed to the Supreme Court the creation of special courts dedicated to intellectual property rights concerns.

IPO director general Adrian S. Cristobal Jr., who had met recently with Chief Justice Hilario Davide, said such a move could help boost confidence in the country's IPR system and strengthen IPR protection efforts of the government.

The special courts will ensure the timely promulgation of decisions on IPR cases, issuance of procedures that would address infringements and imposition of penalties on violators.

"It can also help the IPO in its task of promoting creativity and innovation and the transfer of technology," he added.

The IPO chief said the special court could boost the country's efforts to be removed from the United States Trade Representative's Office's priority watch list of IPR violators.

Cristobal said Davide had expressed interest on the proposal after he was shown the list of cases that were pending in various courts around the country.

The bulk of those cases are lodged in the National Capital Region, particularly in Manila and Quezon City.

Cristobal, citing data from the Supreme Court's Office of the Court Administrator, said 1,184 cases were pending before regional trial courts in 11 regions in the country as of the first quarter of this year.

He said the creation or designation of special courts would hasten the adjudication of IPR cases and back the government's enforcement and protection drives against piracy and counterfeiting.

IPR cases are among those being handled by commercial courts that have been designated by the Supreme Court.

Cristobal called for the creation of two special courts in the National Capital Region, one in Makati City and another one in Manila.

He backed up this call with a related proposal to strengthen the adjudication process by holding training programs and seminars for judges, prosecutors and law enforcers tasked to handle IP cases.

Aside from the judiciary, Cristobal said that the IPO would ask the Department of Justice to designate five to six prosecutors who would work full time on IPR cases.

Seismic research deal worth $10M up for bidding

THE THREE countries that recently tied up for the joint energy resources exploration in South China Sea, near the Spratly group of islands, will bid out a $10-million contract for the conduct of a seismic research in the 143,000-square-kilometer area covered by the collaboration.

Philippine National Oil Co.-Exploration Corp. president Eduardo Mañalac said representatives from the three countries were now meeting in Kunming, China, to map out the guidelines that would govern the selection of an international geophysical firm.

PNOC-EC represents the Philippines' interest in the collaborative effort. China National Offshore Oil Corp. (CNOOC) and Vietnam Oil and Gas Corp. (PetroVietnam) represent China and Vietnam, respectively.

The three firms signed the tripartite agreement for the joint marine seismic undertaking in mid-March this year. They will share the cost of the project.

The move was hailed in the international diplomatic community as an important step in preserving regional peace.

Mañalac said seismic data acquisition, scheduled to start late this year, was the first phase of a three-part effort. This will be followed by the processing and the interpretation of the data. Various international geophysical firms will be invited to participate in the first two phases through competitive bidding.

Manila Water posts 52% profit increase

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

MANILA Water Co., a subsidiary of Ayala Corp., yesterday reported a 52-percent jump in its first semester net earnings to P986 million from P651 million in the same period last year.

This can be attributed to improved operational efficiency, reduction in systems losses and growth in its billed volumes, MWC president Antonino Aquino said in a briefing yesterday.

The robust financial results in the first half strengthened MWC's resolve to pursue its bid to acquire rival firm Maynilad Water Services of the Lopezes. This, Aquino said, would be pursued with four other consortium partners. He, however, declined to identify the prospective partners.

Aquino said MWC was interested in controlling up to 30 percent of the consortium that would bid for Maynilad. The consortium will be owned 60 percent by Filipino investors in keeping with Philippine laws in the operation of a utility company. The group, he said, might accommodate up to six members.

Aquino said he was not ruling out the possibility that other shareholders and affiliates of the Ayala Group would join the consortium.

He also declined to comment on whether MWC was open to the idea of teaming up with rival bidder DMCI Holdings Inc. of the Consunji family.

The Ayala-led water and wastewater services concessionaire improved its revenue by 36 percent to P2.79 billion, or P743 million more than year-ago level.

"The strong cash flow from our operations will enable us to continue our P20-billion capital investment program in the next five years," said Aquino.

As of June, Manila Water has invested a total P2 billion in projects, half of the amount was earmarked for its capital investment program for 2005. This translated to around 291 kilometers of new pipelines. MWC is planning to set aside P20 billion in the next five years for water supply improvement and systems losses reduction.

MWC is also looking to providing bulk water in Carmen, Cebu. It hopes to complete negotiations with the local government for this project by the first quarter next year.

The company is also looking at participating, through management contracts, in water projects in India.

In particular, MWC has pre-qualified in a bidding for a water supply and sewerage project in New Delhi. It also has a management contract for the operation of a new $200-million water and wastewater facility in Tirupur, India.

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ERC order raises Meralco refund budget by ₱1.1B

By Abigail L. Ho

THE LOPEZ-LED Manila Electric Co. will have to shell out an additional P1.1 billion for the first tranche of the last phase of its P30-billion refund program due to an Energy Regulatory Commission order that requires it to include all government agencies in that program.

In a statement issued yesterday, the distribution utility said the particular provision in the ERC's Phase 4 refund order jacked up refund outlays to P3.3 billion from P2.2 billion.

Meralco refund management task force head Leonardo Mabale had earlier said that the company initially expressed concern over the impact of that particular provision as their computations were based on having some government accounts classified under Phase 4B of the refund program and not Phase 4A.

However, despite having to place all government accounts under Phase 4A, effectively accelerating the refund time frame for some of them by a few years, Meralco said it would no longer appeal the order.

A total of 1,447 government agencies and services, having both active and terminated status, were transferred to and reclassified under Phase 4A.

Under the ERC order, still-connected Meralco customers under Phase 4A of the refund scheme would start getting their rebates this month, with the refund process to stretch up to December next year.

Phase 4A customers with terminated accounts as of April 30, 2003, could avail themselves of their refunds from May 2006 to November 2006.

For those under Phase 4B, active customers can get their refunds from October this year to December 2010, while those with terminated accounts can claim their rebates from January 2008 to June 2008.

Meralco, however, cannot just go ahead with the implementation of Phase 4A unless the Bureau of Internal Revenue issues a revenue memorandum order (RMO) that will clearly map out how the company will withhold taxes from those entitled to rebates.

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LTO 6-mo collection hits ₱5.24B

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE LAND Transportation Office, one of the major revenue earners of the government, has collected P5.24 billion in fees in the first half, up from P4.9 billion a year ago.

The agency in-charge of licensing motorists and registering vehicles posted a 6.64 percent increase in revenue in the first six months of the year. This, however, paled in comparison to the 18.9 percent increase recorded in the first half of 2004.

Within target

LTO chief Anneli Lontoc said the pace of registration and licensing was slower this year compared to last year.

Lontoc explained that 2004 was the last year of the implementation of the road users' tax which helped boost LTO collections last year.

Lontoc said she was confident that agency could meet its revenue target of P9.3 billion for this year. The first half collection, she said, was 1.62 percent better than the target of P5.15 billion. Last year, the LTO collected P7.5 billion.

Slower growth

The LTO registered 2,799 vehicles in the first semester this year, up 5.18 percent higher than last year's 2,661. Last year's first semester registration was 11.24 higher than that in the first half of 2003.

The agency issued 1,769 licenses and permits, up 4.78 percent from 1,688 in the same period last year. In 2003, licenses and permits issued went up 9.56 percent.

Lontoc said that last year, the LTO sold vanity plates, which generated P20 million for the agency.

The continued sale of these plates should generate about P1 billion for the government in five years.

Efficiency

Lontoc said that due to reforms that aimed to make its operations more efficient, the LTO manufactured only 126,755 sets of vehicle plates and another 369,470 sets of plates for trucks and trailers.

These were lower by 38 percent and 47.6 percent, respectively, from the levels in the same period last year.

The LTO had planned to increase its fees and charges this year but the move failed to get support from the national government.

The government opposed the planned increases saying that such a move would only put further pressure on the consumers who were already reeling from the impact of the rising prices of fuel and commodity prices.

Raising fees

Lontoc said the LTO had not raised its fees and charges for more than 10 years now. The road users' tax was collected by the LTO but it was remitted to an account managed by a group called the Road Board.

The funds raised from the road users' tax, estimated at about P5 billion, were earmarked for the maintenance of national and provincial roads, programs to minimize air pollution and the acquisition of traffic lights.

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MOUNT MALARAYAT RESIDENTIAL ESTATES

Minimum Bid Price Starts at: P2,700/sqm.
Minimum Bid Price Starts at: P3,170/sqm.

NON-FAIRWAY LOTS		FAIRWAY LOTS	
737sqm	P 1,989,900.00	1033sqm	P 3,274,021.19
758sqm	P 2,046,600.00	1180sqm	P 3,739,927.40
766sqm	P 2,068,200.00	1283sqm	P 4,066,378.69
816sqm	P 2,203,200.00	1595sqm	P 5,055,240.85
870sqm	P 2,349,000.00	2258sqm	P 7,156,572.94

PALM TOWERS
San Antonio Vill., Makati City

Minimum Bid Price Starts at: P28,000/sqm.
Minimum Bid Price Starts at: P25,600/sqm.

RESIDENTIAL UNIT		COMMERCIAL UNIT	
36.36sqm	P 968,630.40	16.16sqm	P 396,889.60
37.38sqm	P 1,049,630.40	17.40sqm	P 427,344.00
52.52sqm	P 1,654,380.00	20.30sqm	P 498,568.00
57.90sqm	P 1,850,253.24	21sqm	P 537,600.00
62.63sqm	P 1,918,983.20	22.25sqm	P 569,600.00
65sqm	P 1,913,600.00	24.75sqm	P 633,600.00
74.40sqm	P 1,982,016.00	26.85sqm	P 687,360.00
75.15sqm	P 2,104,200.00	32.56sqm	P 833,536.00
87.67sqm	P 2,454,760.00	48.64sqm	P 1.136,230.40
98.43sqm	P 2,847,156.00	58.10sqm	P 1,412,992.00

COTTONWOODS HIEGHTS
Antipolo, Rizal

Minimum Bid Price Starts at: P3,040/sqm.

COTTONWOOD HEIGHTS

RESIDENTIAL LOTS	
217sqm	P 659,680.00
242sqm	P 735,680.00
243sqm	P 738,720.00
291sqm	P 884,640.00
304sqm	P 924,160.00
346sqm	P 1,051,840.00
359sqm	P 1,091,360.00
413sqm	P 1.255.520.00
459sqm	P 1.395,360.00

HILLS OF MAIA ALTA
Antipolo City

Minimum Bid Price Starts at: P2,800/sqm.

Maia Alta ANTIPOLO CITY

RESIDENTIAL LOTS	
176sqm	P 492,800.00
177sqm	P 495,600.00
178sqm	P 498,400.00
195sqm	P 546,000.00
201sqm	P 562,800.00
212sqm	P 593,600.00
254sqm	P 711,200.00
260sqm	P 728,000.00
326sqm	P 912,800.00
357sqm	P 999,600.00

TIERRA SOLARIEGA SUBDIVISION
Davao City

Minimum Bid Price Starts at: P2,700/sqm.

RESIDENTIAL LOTS	
173sqm	P 467.100.00
186sqm	P 502,200.00
194sqm	P 523,600.00
413sqm	P 1,115,100.00
415sqm	P 1,520,500.00
420sqm	P 1,134,000.00
450sqm	P 1,215.000.00
493sqm	P 1.419,840.00
507sqm	P 1,460,160.00
508sqm	P 1.137,600.00

PALACIO REAL
Calamba, Laguna

Minimum Bid Price Starts at: P1,800/sqm.

RESIDENTIAL LOTS	
96sqm	P 173,000.00
150sqm	P 195,000.00
183sqm	P 293,000.00
200sqm	P 360,000.00
245sqm	P 466,000.00
277sqm	P 635,000.00
287sqm	P 574,000.00
334sqm	P 635,000.00
400sqm	P 680,000.00
528sqm	P 1,003,000.00

TOWN & COUNTRY
Dasmariñas, Cavite

Minimum Bid Price Starts at: P2,400/sqm.

TO MOLINO
PALIPARAN ROAD
SALITRAN ROAD
CONGRESSIONAL AVE. SOUTH
TO MANILA
TO CARMONA
DLSU MEDICAL CENTER
GEN. AGUINALDO HI-WAY
WALTER MART
DASMARIÑAS CITY PROPER
DASMARIÑAS CITY HALL
TO TAGAYTAY

RESIDENTIAL LOTS	
170sqm	P 408,000.00
190sqm	P 456,000.00
195sqm	P 468,000.00
200sqm	P 480,000.00
270sqm	P 675,000.00
308sqm	P 770,000.00
338sqm	P 845,000.00
436sqm	P 1,090,000.00
480sqm	P 1,020,000.00
566sqm	P 1,358,400.00

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UCPB

A STATEMENT TO OUR LEADERS, TEACHERS, PARENTS AND COMMUNITIES

DepED DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

- **REGION I**
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  Ligaya Soledad T. Miguel - *Asst. Reg'l. Dir.*

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Alma C. Torio (OIC) - *Pangasinan I*
Millie K. Ramirez (OIC) - *Pangasinan II*
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Araceli C. Pastor - *Ilocos Norte*
Rogelio D. Galat - *Ilocos Sur*
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Rowena C. Banzon (OIC) - *San Carlos City*
Cecilia P. Aribuabo - *Laoag City*
Rosalino P. Javier (OIC) - *Vigan City*
Renato R. Viray - *Alaminos City*
Jorge M. Reinante (OIC) - *Candon City*
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Orlando G. Gundayao - *Isabela*
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Alma Dolores M. Navarette - *Nueva Vizcaya.*
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- **REGION III**
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Tarcila P. Javier - *Cabanatuan City*
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Otilla A. Galilea - *Cadiz City*
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Rizalino S. Tortosa (OIC) - *Kabankalan City*
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Licerio T. Napao (OIC) - *Tanjay City*
Elpidio M. Jala (OIC) - *Tagbilaran City*
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Michael M. Cono (OIC) - *Danao City*
Mario C. Andong (OIC) - *Bais City*

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Sol C. Lumarda - *Ormoc City*
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Teresita E. Cascolan - *Zamboanga City*
Erlinda C. Salera (OIC) - *Pagadian City*
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Manuel M. Muyargas - *Zamboanga Sibugay*

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Sinforosa A. Guinares - *Misamis Oriental*
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Mario C. Naranjo - *Ozamis City*
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  Susana Teresa B. Estigoy - *Asst. Reg'l Director*

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Gloria P. Labor - *Davao City*
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Bienvenido B. Cuison (OIC) - *Samal City*

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Beatriz G. Omay - *Agusan del Sur*
Rizalina S. Bayon - *Surigao del Norte*
Fe C. Valeroso - *Surigao del Sur*
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Lucia S. Castro - *Bislig City*

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Rolando Magno - *Taguig/ Pateros*
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Virginia L. Peñafuerte - *Las Piñas City*
Eduardo V. Lopez - *Parañaque City*
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  Lolita A. Andrada - *Bureau of Secondary Education*
  Carolina S. Guerrero - *Bureau of Alternative Learning System*
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  Orfelia O. Tuy - *Nat'l. Educ. Academy of the Philippines*
  Nelia V. Benito - *Nat'l. Educ. Testing Research Ctr.*
  Socorro A. Pilor - *Instructional Materials Council Secretariat*
  Jesus L.R. Mateo - *EDPITAF Project Management Office*

WE SUPPORT THE STATEMENT OF DepED NATIONAL.

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  Sitty M. Bagul - *Lanao Del Sur I*
  Zenaida P. Ampatua - *Lanao Del Sur II*
  Mona Macatanong - *Marawi City*
  Omar D. Aranan - *Basilan*
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  Abduhasad Mukarrama - *Tawi-Tawi*

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  Raymundo A. Lapating, President
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  Arnulfo H. Empleto, Vice President
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  Domingo B. Alidon, President
  - DepED National Union

Schools First *means* Students First

REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
KAGAWARAN NG EDUKASYON
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

DepED
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A STATEMENT TO OUR LEADERS, TEACHERS, PARENTS AND COMMUNITIES

Quality Education must be a Path out of this Crisis.

We believe that quality education must be a path out of this crisis. Genuine democracies the world over succeed only where:

- Teaching is valued by society as a time-honored profession;
- Education is an endeavor where the whole community is involved; and
- Education system is non-partisan and insulated from politics.

The political events of these times are important to the future of the country. The running of the schools and education for all, especially our young children, however, are concerns of the present.

General Statement to the Public

The Department has put in place reforms to improve the quality of education over the past three years. These include **academic reforms:**

- New grading system
- Bridge program to prepare elementary graduates for high school
- *Every Child a Reader* program
- English, Science and Math proficiency
- Revisions to the Basic Education Curriculum
- Textbook policy (including a new, more stringent textbook content evaluation process); and
- Expansion of the *Madrasah* education system for young Muslim Filipinos
- Alternative Learning System for out-of-school children, youth and adults

and **financial management reforms:**

- Decentralization of the payroll system to the regions
- Clean-up of the automatic payroll deduction system (APDS) to protect teachers from usurious lenders
- Professionalization of the Department's provident fund for teachers and non-teaching personnel
- Tightening of qualification standards in the hiring of teachers and principals
- Direct-release system and the electronic NGAS (New Government Accounting System)
- Government procurement reforms (school buildings, furniture, textbooks, instructional materials)

Over the past three years, our Department has worked hard to create and maintain a corruption-free environment with emphasis on cleaning up anomalies in hiring, procurement and finance. We are today a professionally-managed organization of educators.

Started under Secretary Edilberto C. de Jesus as the ***12-Point Agenda*** (later the ***Education Roadmap***), Secretary Florencio B. Abad expanded and refined these reforms as the ***Schools First Initiative.***

To all our publics, **the Department will stay the course with the *Schools First Initiative*** that puts in place the plans for the decentralization of education down to the schools and to involve local school boards, parents and communities in taking responsibility and ownership for the achievement and performance of students under their watch.

Despite the ongoing political developments, the career professionals in the field down to our school heads and teachers assure parents that the delivery of quality education through our schools and alternative learning systems will stay focused on the ***Schools First Initiative***. We are committed to the education of our children.

To our Leaders

Stay focused on education reforms. We need a peaceful, orderly and quick resolution to this crisis to help us focus on the task-at-hand for ourselves (quality education) and for the nation (growth and stability). Support the education reforms by significantly increasing the necessary resources to allow us to deliver on these.

To our Teachers

Stay focused on teaching. We encourage school discussion of issues to promote better understanding of the situation. But we will not tolerate mass actions that disrupt our schools. Legitimate issues should be handled within available mechanisms. We assure our teachers that the Department is working to raise the necessary resources for education, including improving teacher welfare and a salary increase.

To our Parents

Be actively involved in your children's education. Get involved with your school. This period provides us with an opportunity to clarify and affirm the values important to our society, such as truth, justice, accountability, citizenship and love of country.

A Statement to All

Education is important to the future of this country. **Let us spend more on public education.** To our leaders, both national and local, as well as our major publics – parents, local business sector and our immediate communities – this is what we must do:

1. Raise the annual budget of the Department of Education by at least 8-9% per year over the next five years. This yearly increase of P9-10 Billion will allow us to catch up with the shortages and to provide quality inputs to keep our children engaged in the school system.
2. Focus the Special Education Fund (SEF) of local governments solely on basic education, including the education for out-of-school children, youth and adults, and on our schools. Let us minimize the use of the SEF on non-basic-education-related matters.
3. Ensure that the Department of Public Works and Highways turns over only completely-constructed school buildings. Local leaders must make sure that DPWH-constructed school buildings are complete and to specifications.
4. Depoliticize education policy. Let us not be afraid to provide an additional year of education to better prepare our children for their future. Let only properly trained pre-school teachers teach pre-school. Let us expand high school to better prepare our graduates for university or to gain more competitive skills needed for the world of work. Let us support electoral reforms that will free teachers from mandatory poll duties.

The education of our children is too important to leave to Government alone. All of us have a collective responsibility to make our education system perform. We ask all Filipinos to join us in this undertaking.

RAMON C. BACANI
Undersecretary
Officer-in-Charge

FE A. HIDALGO
Undersecretary
Programs & Projects

JUAN MIGUEL LUZ
Undersecretary
Finance & Administration

MANAROS BORANSING
Special Assistant to the Secretary
(with rank of Undersecretary)

TEODORO CATINDIG
Assistant Secretary
Programs

JESUS G. GALVAN
Assistant Secretary
Finance

LILIA Z. ROCES
Assistant Secretary
Research & Planning

CAMILO MIGUEL M. MONTESA
Assistant Secretary
Legal

Manila, Philippines
15 July 2005

Schools First means Students First

PEOPLE at WORK

E-mail: peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Raul O. Marcelo
Subsection Editor Regina Galang Reyes

Text us your feedback: inquirer paw name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Sleep specialist helps people increase productivity

ESPIRITU-PICAR RODEL ROTONI

By Candy G. Villanueva
Contributor.

DO YOU know that one third of your life is spent sleeping? It is ironic that because of the daily demands of life and the desire to get so many things done in one day, many people take for granted that sleep directly affects the quality and quantity of their daily performance. Some people sleep an average of three to four hours a day and hope that it will be enough to sustain them through a hectic day. Others rely on sleep aids that can be harmful over a long period of time. Many toss and turn in bed praying for at least an hour of deep sleep. "You will be amazed that a lot of people have misconceptions about what 'good sleep' is," confirms Dr. Rosalina B. Espiritu-Picar.

A sleep specialist from the Makati Medical Center, Dr. Espiritu-Picar aims to reeducate the people on their sleep habits and re-acquaint them to the wonders of what a good night's sleep can bring. She is a board certified neurologist with special training in sleep medicine. Currently a member of the medical staff in Makati Medical Center and University of Perpetual Help Medical Center, Laguna, she serves as co-director of the Makati Medical Center Sleep Disorders Laboratory and Board of Governors of the Philippine Society of Sleep Medicine.

ALL ABOUT WORK

Re-engineering lifestyle

"The capacity to sleep well is such a God-given gift that eludes a lot of people. If you can sleep well at night, you should be grateful for the blessing," says Dr. Espiritu-Picar who makes it her goal to share this blessing. According to the sleep doctor, she wants to help people get the kind of sleep they deserve. This is a challenge for the doctor because the patient needs to be very proactive in sleep. For instance, insomnia management entails a lot of behavioral modifications and re-education. Unfortunately, not everyone is open to re-engineering their lifestyle. Some prefer the easy way out and opt for the pill, which could be harmful. "Effective treatment doesn't happen that way," says the doctor.

Aside from treatment, Dr. Espiritu-Picar also works to re-educate the people about the wonders of a good shuteye. Many are unaware of the hazards that sleep disorders pose. For instance, public awareness on sleep apnea, a brief cessation of breathing during sleep, is very low. Many are unaware that sleep apnea decreases blood oxygen levels and causes brief disruptions of sleep thus causing sleepiness during the day. Also, people believe that snoring is an indication of a deep restful sleep. According to Dr. Espiritu-Picar, this is far from the truth. By treating and educating the people in terms of sleep management, the sleep specialist hopes to make people perform and live better by making them sleep better. "Because the quality of our days affects the quality of our nights and vice versa," she explains.

Sleep skills

Sleep medicine is a young and growing subspecialty. It is actually a multidisciplinary field that involves pulmonologists, neurologists, psychiatrists and otorhinolaryngologists. The most basic requirement of the job is a medicine degree pertinent to these specializations. Unfortunately, the country does not offer training courses on sleep medicine. Dr. Espiritu-Picar took special training in sleep medicine at the Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center. At the university's Sleep Disorders Center, she learned to integrate the knowledge of sleep and wakefulness. Dr. Espiritu-Picar was also trained to diagnose and treat any sleep disorder or sleep-related symptom, whether physiological or psychological in cause.

Although her education at the Sleep Disorders Center proved invaluable, the doctor claims that her patients are her best teachers. "You hone your craft with every encounter and each case is unique and challenging."

On top of the technical background, the job requires patience, sincerity and concern. The sleep specialist adds that a doctor must have a willingness to listen and a capacity to analyze and assess a patient's condition. Through hours of consultation, gathering data and analysis of the patient's history and physical and neurologic exam, a specialist must be able to explain the patient's complaints and hopefully effectively address the problem.

Shuteye satisfaction

Dr. Espiritu-Picar's passion to put people to sleep, so to speak, stems from a genuine interest in people. She claims she loves discovering what makes people tick and enjoys observing human behavior. "You could say I was a big Freudian and Jungian fan."

The doctor also enjoys the dynamics of the doctor-patient relationship. A sleep disorder treatment is a partnership. According to her, progress can only be achieved if the patient is committed to getting better and acknowledges the fact that he or she is responsible for his or her own healing. Medication is only part of the treatment. "Reaching your therapeutic goals is a complex interplay of the patient-doctor relationship, patient's attitudes and the desire to get well."

For the specialist, being a doctor is a vocation. She looks at it as an important, noble and even spiritual responsibility. For her, it all starts from the right intentions. "Your desires should be to sincerely help people. If that is your desire, you will do everything to gain the competence you need, study the long hours, work through impossible schedules, accept the sacrifices you have to make and that compensation only becomes a natural consequence of competence."

(*E-mail feedback to* candyvillanueva-@pldtdsl.net)

Spanish-American expert in Iowa university is a Filipino

By Ime Morales Aznar
Contributor

CAREER TALES

MATIBAG GENE MATIBAG/CONTRIBUTOR

EUGENIO Matibag is an associate professor of Spanish in Iowa State University's Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures. He teaches Spanish-American literature, language, conversation, and composition. He has published two books: "Afro-Cuban Religious Experience: Cultural Reflections in Narrative," published by University Press of Florida in 1996; and "Haitian-Dominican Counterpoint: Insularity and Difference," published by Palgrave Global Publishing at St. Martin's Press in 2003. He is now working on his third book, "Spanish Philippine Literature and Post-colonial Theory: 1840-1941."

His father, an officer in the US Navy, brought the family to the US when Matibag was only a year old. In college, he studied Comparative Literature at the University of Redlands, then acquired his M.A. and Ph.D. in Comparative Literature at the University of California, Irvine. Matibag has been teaching since 1980. For him, the academic life provides "something sophisticated and spiritually satisfying … it was the work of the mind, somehow pure and unalienated; essentially bourgeois notions." He went into teaching because he was also "attracted to work related to language," which fascinates him. But he admits that presently, he has more "serious intentions" of addressing important social and philosophical issues related to language.

Experiences of culture

Matibag's reasearch and studies have brought him to many places including Mexico, France, Cuba, Martinique, Spain, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and the Dominican Republic. Areas of his study involve Hispanic Caribbean Literature, Critical and Postcolonial Theory, Modern Latin American Literature, and Spanish Colonization in the Philippines. His current project on Spanish-Philippine Literature has brought him to visit the country twice, in 2002 and 2004. His future plans include researching the Asian presence in Latin America.

"I have committed my work to cross-cultural and cross-ethnic understanding; in recent years I have researched and spoken on the topic of 'diversity' both in society and the academic institution," he says. Matibag also believes that the Asian-American Studies program at Iowa State, which he started "almost single-handedly," makes a big local contribution to the teaching of issues related to US populations of Asian descent, including Filipinos. When we experience the culture of the Asian-American, it leads us to "reconnect with our own heritages and awaken interest in our own genealogies."

Love of teaching

According to Matibag, teaching in a university where there aren't too many Asian-American students or faculty members can get lonely sometimes. But he uses the situation to his advantage by teaching others about Asian-American and Philippine-related issues. "Much of my research has to do with the impact of colonialism and its legacy; I try to raise my students' awareness of these issues and their implications for their actions in the world," he said.

Presently, Matibag has been appointed interim director of the new Center for American Intercultural Studies. Tasks related to this new post form part of his current workload. That's on top of the ordinary day-to-day school activities like interviews with students and colleagues, preparation of lectures and discussions, teaching, attending meetings, and grading papers.

Success ladder

The movie "Tampopo" suggests that success is a ladder that each one of us has for ourselves. "Some of us don't make much effort to climb, some don't even know that they have a ladder," Matibag says. "And some, by dint of hard work, focus and determination, can make it to the top." He believes that such a ladder can be either personally or institutionally defined, or both. The important thing is to set objectives and goals, to determine how to achieve those goals and objectives, and then to "make an all out effort to achieve them—or, in falling short and failing, at least knowing that one has done his best and come out ahead, no matter what the outcome."

Accomplishing scholarly and academic projects that make a positive impact in the world is important to Matibag. But he says that it's good to be realistic and practical, as well. "Some financial security—money enough 'to satisfy the requirements of the imagination,' as one of Henry James's characters puts it—is necessary as a base on which to build the dream and fund the personal projects," he admits. "And success would not be a complete success if I hadn't done my best to play a nurturing and supportive role as father and husband in my family."

(*Send feedback to* blubitel@yahoo.com)

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For more information/reservations, contact Ateneo CORD at tel. no. 426-5931 or 426-6282, fax no. 426-6065 or e-mail ateneocord@admu.edu.ph.

'I am still unable to speak fluent English'

By Tita Datu Puangco

Advice
FOR THE ANXIOUS PERSON AT WORK

I AM an avid reader of your column every Wednesday and I got curious about your column on your English Language Center. I have attended short courses on English speaking and grammar but they all seem to be ineffective. I feel I am still struggling with my English. I do not know what is wrong—is it I or the program that I attended?

I seem to have lapses in my memory when using difficult words. I feel confident using English when I know I am speaking with those who are less proficient than me, but my self-confidence suffers when I am speaking with those who are more proficient than I. My friends laugh at me each time I speak English because they would say I am *maarte*. My problem might appear trivial to you but please help me since I know English nowadays is in great demand. By the way, it took me several minutes to finish this letter. I had a hard time putting my thoughts together.

Language Challenged

Let me start by congratulating you for choosing to work on self-improvement. It is true that mastery of English as a language is worth it. It can help you move towards career advancement and fulfillment.

First of all, let me say that the English language combines a number of language arts and skills. These are speaking, listening, reading, writing. Like other arts and skills they can be learned. If you decide to take yet another course, I propose you choose one that includes a pre-test and a post-test. The pre-test will help your English facilitator discover your strengths as well as your improvement areas. Your post-test will tell you whether the course you attended helped you overcome your weaknesses.

Everyday use

At Ancilla, we have an English Proficiency Program that we call English Jamming. We want to communicate that learning English is art and that one can in fact enjoy learning the language. The experience is similar to a musical band that comes together to "jam." This approach implies a number of assumptions around language.

One, that language has to be relevant. You have to use it as part of your day-to-day communications. If this is not possible in your current work, I suggest you give yourself an hour of thinking and speaking in English a day. Ask an officemate to join you in this adventure. I assure you after one week your English proficiency level will be much improved.

Two, your problem appears to be lack of confidence in speaking the language. This problem is similar to what we encounter when we run our English programs. We constantly remind students not to focus on errors at the beginning. Our view of errors is to simply see them as miscues. Once you discover the obstacle or root behind the miscue then you can effortlessly correct the error.

Learning stages

Then remember there are stages in learning. You must be patient as you move from one stage to the other. First you are unconsciously incompetent. Proper diagnosis will enable you to gain awareness and therefore reach the consciously incompetent stage. This is the time when participants grapple with anxiety, lack of self-confidence and feelings of incompetence. While you focus seriously on the lessons, I suggest you don't take yourself too seriously. Keep your peace and laugh at yourself.

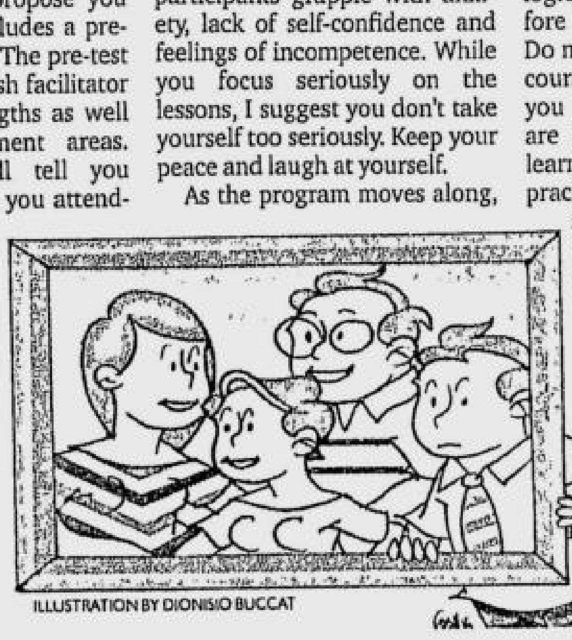
As the program moves along, you will experience reaching the consciously competent stage. Still awkward, but gaining greater fluency and proficiency in the language, you are starting to use grammatically correct English. You begin to experience that good grammar is your best tool in being understood. A good program teaches you not just the details of grammar usage but also an appreciation of its use and function. Your memory lapses in relation to using "difficult" words may be traced to your mind not recognizing the coherence of the word and its meaning. I suggest you use simple, easy to understand words because language is meant to express meaning and not simply to impress your listener.

More complex

As you achieve greater comfort with the language you will become unconsciously competent. You will overcome being self-conscious and the language becomes second nature to you. You mentioned that your other officemates laugh at you when you attempt to speak in the right way. Simply persist. We know that in speaking English you have to put the proper stresses and intonation in a word or sentence. This is part of the language and critical for fluent communications. Compared to Filipino, English is really more complex pronunciation wise. While in Filipino, our vowels are simply five, English would have combinations of these vowels.

You mentioned having difficulty putting your thoughts together. I suggest you develop a logical outline of your ideas before doing your written piece. Do not expect miracles after the course. If you do not use what you learned immediately, you are likely to forget what you learned. So practice, practice, practice, After the course, some students need more individualized coaching and assistance. You can arrange for regular tutoring or conversations with the language facilitators. All the best.

(*Ms Puangco is CEO and chair of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting. Send feedback through e-mail to* advice@ancillaedc.-com.ph *or fax to 892-2902.*)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1.5% Auto Express 5221001-02

1.5% CARLOAN 373-6519

1.5% CARLOAN 788-0361

1.5% Easy Car Loan 4112547/48

1.5% Easy Car Loan 3748765

1.5% Easy Carloan 7815352/55

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

1.5% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

1Hour Car Loan 9153460
2%w/o taking car 6560140

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/o taking car 7880183-84

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 3732081/82

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490/95

2% w/out taking car 5315577

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CAREGIVER 5280730

DEP ED MARIKINA CITY
OSEC -DECSB TCH2-36186 35997 TCH1-47705 47701 47903 TCH2-36156 31540

OFFICE STAFF 0918-2742245

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911-27-13

PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

BIZNES OPPORTUNITY SEMINAR
UNLIMITED INCOME
JULY 30,
SAT, 9:30 a.m.
P.R. TOLENTINO & ASSOCIATES
4/F Philamlife Bldg.
Aurora Blvd.,
cor. Gen. Araneta
Araneta Center,
Cubao, Q.C.
0917-522-4900 /
912-6084

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

LICENSE FOR PRIVATE RECRUITMENT AND PLACEMENT AGENCY
PRPA LICENSE NO. M-05-00-140
TIN NO. 2334-068-673-000 ☒ New ☐ Renewal

This license to recruit, process and deploy landbased workers is hereby granted to:

TRIPLE STAR STAFFING CENTER, INC.
Room 9, Miranda Building
McArthur Hi-way, Malinta
Valenzuela City

pursuant to the Labor Code and the Omnibus Rules Implementing the Code.

This license shall be valid for the period July 5, 2005 to July 4, 2007 unless sooner revoked, cancelled or suspended for violation of the Labor Code and related issuances. Transfer or use by any other person or entity renders this license null and void.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Official Seal of the National Capital Region, Department of Labor and Employment, to be affixed at the City of Manila, Philippines, this 5th day of July 2005.

(Sgd.) RICARDO S. MARTINEZ, SR. CESO III
Regional Director

(PDI – July 27, 2005)

AUCTION SALE

FILIPINAS PAWNSHOP INC.
1137 P. Gil St. Paco, Mla.
Will sell all expired pledges of December 2004 and January 2005 on August 7, 2005, Sunday at 10:00a.m. Sons of J. Lanuza Auctioneer. (PDI - May 24, 2005)

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

NEED SIDELINE?
P/F up to P20K.mo. 3762642 to 43

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that the estate of the late PANFILO M. ABENOJAR has been extrajudicially settled among his heirs on July 23, 2005 before Pacifico A. Tunac, Notary Public in and for Quezon City as per Doc. No. 55, Page No.12, Book XIX, Series of 2005 (PDI-July 27, Aug. 3, & 10, 2005)

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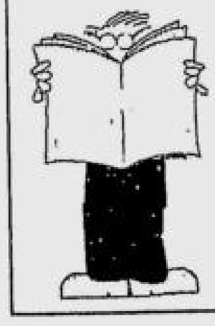

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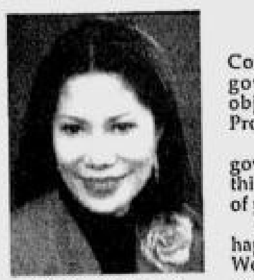
Read it every Sunday with the Philippine Daily Inquirer and visit it online at www.jobmarketonline.com

JOB Market ONLINE

Messages



ROSEMARIE C. BASA
Chairman of the Board
CSHFI

This sequel to the first LGU – Private Sector Housing Conference is born of the clamor, mostly from the local government units, for us to zero-in on a more definite objective. Thus, our theme, "Sandaang bahay Bawat Probinsya, Lungsod, Munisipyo at Pribadong Sektor".

We are very grateful to our counterparts in the government sector, the DILG and HUDCC, for taking part in this exercise once more. We are honored to share in the vision of providing shelter to the homeless.

To all the delegates, guests and friends, we made this event happen for you, Thank you for coming to be part of this affair. We hope we have been of help to you. We wish you all the success, as we look forward to building more homes with you.

May we come to reap the fruits of our labor.

EFREN "Choy" L. ALAS
President
CSHFI

I am pleased to welcome the Local Government Units, our guests, delegates, and all my colleagues in the private sector, to the 2nd LGU Private Sector Housing Conference.

To our counterparts in the government housing sector, the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC), it is our pleasure to continue to work side by side with you in staging this event.

To the conference delegates, our warmest welcome. Your participation is a clear sign of your desire to be involved and to be counted in the common national shelter program for all Filipinos.

To all our supporters in and out of this arena, we extend not only our thanks but our assurance as well, that your assistance will put to be best use.

Maraming Salamat Po!

FLORANTE C. OFRECIO
Chairperson
2nd Housing Conference

We at the Creba Social Housing Foundation, Inc. (CSHFI), warmly extend our most sincere gratitude to our partners in pushing the 2nd LGU–Private Sector Housing Conference: the Department of the Interior Local Government (DILG), the Housing and Urban Dev't Coordinating Council (HUDCC), and all the participating Local Government Units for their enormous support and invaluable participation.

Truly there is much to be achieved when gov't and private sector work side by side in putting together their best ideas towards nation building.

It is my great honor and privilege to be part of this year's 2nd LGU – Private Sector Housing Conference working team, which include hardworking and dedicated men and women from both government and private sector

CREBA SOCIAL HOUSING FOUNDATION INC.
Founded 1992
CSHFI

CREBA

DILG

HUDCC

2nd LGU – Private Sector

HOUSING CONFERENCE

July 28 - 29, 2005 * Philippine Trade Training Center (PTTC)
Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Roxas Blvd., Pasay City

Theme :

"Sandaang Bahay Bawat Probinsya, Lungsod, Munisipyo at Pribadong Sektor"

Highlights of the 2nd Housing Conference

The Creba Social Housing Foundation, Inc. (CSHFI) in support of the housing program of Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, as a sequel to last year's successful Housing Conference will be holding the "2nd LGU-Private Sector Housing Conference" on July 28 & 29, 2005, at the Philippine Trade Training Center, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Roxas Blvd., Pasay City.

The Conference aims to boost the housing program for the poor and at the same time provide an opportunity to local government officials to explore avenues for new financing sources, the use of new technologies and the possibilities of join-venture agreements with the private housing sector.

With the theme of the Conference being *"Sandaang Bahay Bawat Probinsya, Lungsod, Munisipyo at Pribadong Sektor"*, the CSHFI hopes to reach out to the different sectors of society especially for the construction and financing of socialized housing projects, the creation of jobs outside the urban centers and improvement of the living condition of our less fortunate brothers and sisters in the countryside.

Simultaneously with the housing conference of CSHFI, a JOB FAIR will be one of the featured events of the 2nd LGU-Private Sector Housing Conference, a joint project of the CREBA Social Housing Foundation (CSHFI), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) that will be held on July 27 & 28, 2005 at the main lobby of PTTC.

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

JOBS FAIR July 27 – 28, 2005 Main Lobby, PTTC
Wednesday, July 27, 2005

8:00 - 9:00 9:00 - 5:00 p.m.	Welcome Remarks	HON. AMADO S. BAGATSING Vice Chairman, HUDCC

HOUSING CONFERENCE Hall B, PTTC
Thursday, July 28, 200 MORNING SESSION

7:30 - 8:45	Registration	
8:40 - 8:50	Invocation	Ms. TECHIE P. BAUTISTA Presidential Adviser, CSHFI
	NationalAnthem	Ms. JEANETTE S. HERNANDEZ Member, CSHFI
8:50 – 9:00	Opening Remarks	Mr. FLORANTE C. OFRECIO Chair, 2nd Housing Conference
9:00 – 9:15	Welcome Remarks	Hon. Antonino G. Calixto Vice Mayor, Pasay City
9:15 – 9:45	Conference Overview Review of Last Year's Minutes and Achievements	Mr. Efren "Choy" L. Alas President, CSHFI VP - Chapter Affairs, CREBA
9:45 - 10:15	10 Easy Steps(Sandaang Bahay Bawat Probinsya, Lungsod, Munisipyo at Pribadong Sektor)	Ms. Rosemarie C. Basa Chairman, CSHFI Executive Vice President, CREBA
	1st Sandaang Bahay Bawat Munisipyo	Hon. ALEX M. ARANAS Pola, Oriental Mindoro
10:45-11:15	LGU Funding for Housing"	Hon. ROMERO F.S. QUIMBO President & CEO Home Mutual Development Fund
11:15–11:45	"Supporting LGU Development"	Ms. HILDA E. PICO Senior Executive Vice President/ OIC Land Bank of the Philippines
11:45-12:15	OPEN FORUM (LUNCHEON)	

Emcees: Ms. Cathy D. Yulo, Member, CSHFI / Mr. Manuel H. Torres, Trustee, CSFHI

Thursday, July 28, 2005 AFTERNOON SESSION
CREBA 7th MBM

12:45 - 2:00	President's Remark	Dr. JAIME A. CURA National President, CREBA
	Introduction of CREBA Guest Speaker	Hon. RODOLFO G. VALENCIA Congressman, 1st district, Oriental Mindoro
	"LGU Housing"	Vice President Noli L. de Castro Chairman, HUDCC
2:00 – 2:30	"Development Plans for Kawit, Cavite"	Hon. Federico A. Poblete Mayor, Kawit, Cavite
	SNACKS	
2:30– 3:00	"Global Trends & Revolutionary Ideas in Architecture, Urban Planning & Real Estate Development"	Arch. Felino A. Palafox, Jr. FUAP Founder & Senior Partner Palafox Associates
3:00 - 3:30	"Laws & Regulations for LGU Housing"	Hon. Francisco L. Dagñalan Commissioner, HLURB
3:00 – 3:30	OPEN FORUM LUNCHEON	

Emcees: Ms. Avelina P. Acuña, VP Chapter Affairs, CSHFI / Atty. Juliano P. Nacuno, Corporate Secretary, CSHFI

Friday, July 29, 2005 MORNING SESSION

7:30 – 9:00	Registration	
	Invocation	Mr. Robert Alvarez, Jr. Trustee, CSHFI
	National Anthem	Phil. Tourism Chorale
9:00 – 9:30	"Promoting Local Tourism"	Hon. Robert Dean S. Barbers General Manager, Philippine Tourism Authority (PTA)
9:30 – 10:00	"DBM Funding for LGU Housing"	Hon. Mario Relampagos UnderSecretary & OIC, Dept. of Budget & Management (DBM)
10:00–10:3	"The PCCI Response to Housing"	Hon. DONALD Y. DEE President Phil. Chamber of Commerce & Industry (PCCI)
10:30 -11:00	"Providing Housing for LGU Employees"	Hon. Angelo T. Reyes Secretary Dept. of Interior & Local Government (DILG)
11:00 -11:30	"Congressional Funding"	Hon. EDUARDO C. ZIALCITA Congressman, Lone district, Parañaque City
11:30-12:00	"Role of DAR in the Housing Development Program"	Hon. DATU NASSER C. PANGANDAMAN Secretary Dept. of Agrarian Reform (DAR)
12:00 -12:30	"Role of DENR in the Housing Development Program"	Hon. MANUEL D. GEROCHI UnderSecretary for Lands Dept. Environment & National Resources
12:30 - 1:00	OPEN FORUM (LUNCHEON)	

Emcees: Mr. Reymar Mansilungan, Job Fair, CSHFI

Friday, July 29, 2005 AFTERNOON SESSION
"LIVELIHOOD and FINANCING PROGRAMS"

1:30 – 2:00	Mr. Edgar V. Generoso President Peoples Credit & Finance Corp
2:00 –2:30	Mr. Nelson C. Buenaflor President & CEO Quedan and Rural Credit Guarantee Corp.
	SNACKS
:30 –3:00	Mr. RENATO A. OXINA Team Head Strategic Technology & Livelihood Group
3:00 –3:30	Ms. MA. LUNA C. DAVID Vice President for Loans Group Small Business Guarantee & Finance Corp.
3:00 – 4:00	OPEN FORUM

Emcees: Dir. Jeannette E. Cruz, HUDCC / Mr. Harold Dacumos, Job Fair, CSHFI

Conference Sponsor:
Pag-IBIG Fund (HDMF) * Benjamin Construction Equipment, Inc. * MICRODATA Systems & Management, Inc.

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PAG-IBIG FUND

Corporate Headquarters
The Atrium of Makati
Makati Avenue, Makati City

Circular – Letter
Series of 2005

TO : ALL NCR BRANCHES / REGIONAL OFFICES / SUB-REGIONAL & EXTENSION OFFICES / COLLECTING AGENTS

Notice is hereby given regarding the loss of the following Pag-IBIG Fund Receipts which were issued to Lakeside Nest Realty Inc. and were declared lost per Affidavit of Loss executed by its Vice-President, Mr. Serapio B. Lucero on June 01, 2005:

E6079394
E6079478
E6079481
E6079588
E6079630
E6999601

E7770659
E7770718
E8488193
E8729036
E9246364
E9246431

Said PFRs are hereby cancelled and payments under said PFR series will not be honored by the Fund.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. ROMERO FEDERICO S. QUIMBO**
President & Chief Executive Officer

June 08, 2005

(PDI–July 13, 20 & 27, 2005)

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION
Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SALE OF JUNK ITEMS

"AS IS, WHERE IS" BASIS

DATE OF BIDDING : August 9, 2005, 2:00 P.M., Solanum Hall, Bldg.-1 Grd. Floor, NPC-HO, Agham Road corner Quezon Ave., Diliman, Quezon City.

The National Power Corporation will conduct public bidding of the following scrap and junk items located at various NPC stations.

SCHEDULE – I

	Item Description and Location	Minimum Bid Price
1	One (1) lot of scrap metal consisting of metal sheets forms, steel buoy, steel chain, frames and various types of steel cabinets located at Re-Greening Field Office and Rad-Waste Building, BNPP, Morong, Bataan.	P 862,640.00/lot
2.	One (1) lot junk items consisting of unserviceable substations equipment, batteries, radiators, heat sink, junk motor vehicles located at Concepcion Substation, Concepcion, Tarlac	P 78,050.00/lot
3	One (1) lot various unserviceable storage tanks, 11 units and assorted scrap metals consisting of substation equipment, empty drums, located at Bataan Thermal Power plant, Limay, Bataan	P 338,223.00/lot
4.	One (1) lot unserviceable power cable located at Mak-Ban GTPP Bo. Bitin, Bay, Laguna	P 3,132,000.00/lot
5.	One (1) lot of Amlan, Pipeline, located at Amlan, Negros Oriental	P 70,400.00/lot

SCHEDULE – II

1.	Barite 8,010 bags, 100 lbs per bag located at Tiwi Geothermal Power Plant, Tiwi, Albay	p 502,627.50/lot

ALL BIDS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE FOLLOWING:
1. PROPOSAL BOND DEPOSIT IN THE FORM OF CASH OR MANAGER'S / CASHIER'S CHECK EQUIVALENT TO TEN PERCENT (10%) OF THE TOTAL BID PRICE OFFER.
2. LATEST INCOME TAX RETURN (2004) ORIGINAL OR XEROX COPY) OF THE BIDDER
3. TAX CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE OF THE BIDDER

INTERESTED PARTY WHO WISH TO SECURE BID FORM MUST PRESENT ONE (1) VALID IDENTIFICATION CARD LIKE DRIVER'S LICENSE, GSIS ID, SSS ID, POSTAL ID, PASSPORT, PRC ID AND COMPANY ID.

Interested parties who wish to participate in the public bidding may secure the bid form at P500.00/set from Mr. S.V. Lomuntad, Jr. OIC, Warehousing Inventory, Traffic and Asset Disposal Division (WITADD) at Bldg. I, Ground Floor, NPC Head Office, Corner Agham Road and Quezon Ave., Diliman, Q.C. or call telephone no. 922-8431. Deadline for issuance of bid form is 4:30 PM, August 8, 2005.

For the Materials Management Department
(Sgd.) FELIX B. TACATA, JR.
OIC, MMD

(PDI – July 27, 28 & 29, 2005)

TransCo

National Transmission Corporation
South Luzon Operations and Maintenance
Tel. No.: (02) 5206776; (02) 9814595/9814539/9814576/9814577/ 9814578 loc. 4002; (049) 4114500 loc. 4002

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

AD NO. TRANSCO 2005-08B

The **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION,** through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder requirements:

PR NUMBER	ITEM DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	APPROVED BUDGET
PSMD-N-05-074	TRANSFORMER DIFFERENTIAL RELAY	6 SETS	P 2,877,708.00
	OVERCURRENT RELAY	4 SETS	640,000.00

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last 2 years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed items for bidding. The Eligibility Check/ Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is as follows:

Activities			Schedule
1.	Issuance of Bid Documents		July 28 - August 24, 2005
2.	Pre-bid Conference	PSMD-N-05-074	August 12, 2005 9:00 AM
3.	Opening of Bids	PSMD-N-05-074	August 25, 2005 9:00 AM

Bid Documents will be available to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P500.00 minimum, or 0.01% of the ABC whichever is higher, per bidding schedule to the National Transmission Corporation Cashier. Complete set of Bid Documents may be obtained from the BAC Secretariat/MMS, Administration Division, SLO&M, San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna.

The National Transmission Corporation assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The National Transmission Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any required formality or defect therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.

TRANSCO-South Luzon's other requirements are posted at the DBM Website: www.procurementservice.net.

(Sgd.) R. B. VERGARA
Chairman, BAC

(PDI - July 27, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
CENTER FOR HEALTH DEVELOPMENT
Northern Mindanao
Cagayan de Oro City
Tel. No. (088) 858-7123, 2332306, 3504325; 726470

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Center for Health Development – Northern Mindanao, Carmen, Cagayan de Oro City, is inviting registered caterers, hotel and restaurant operators and service-providers or contractors, Printing Shops and Medical and Laboratory Reagents Suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following items:

Category	Approved Budget Cost
1. Catering Service (live-out activities in Cag. De Oro City	P 651,950.00
2. Board and Lodging (live-in activities in Cag. De Oro City)	170,100.00
3. Printing/Reproduction of IEC Materials	278,397.00
4. Medical & Laboratory Supplies, Materials and Reagents	813,350.60

Prospective bidders should possess valid and approved licenses and permits in their line of business with local authorities and should pass non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria in the Eligibility Checking. Only eligible bidders will be issued official bid form upon payment of a non refundable cost of P50.00.

Bidding Process	Schedule	
	Category 1,2 & 3	Category 4
Suppliers/Contractors submission of documents and eligibility checking	July 29 to Aug. 8, 2005	August 16 to 26, 2005
Pre-Bidding Conference	July 29, 2005, 9:00 AM CHD Conference Room	August 19, 2005, 9:00 AM CHD Conference Room
Opening of Bids	August 9, 2005, 9:00 AM CHD Conference Room	August 30, 2005, 9:00 AM CHD Conference Room
Bid Evaluation	August 11-12, 2005	September 7-9, 2005
Release of Notice of Award	August 26, 2005	September 23, 2005

The Director IV of the DOH-CHD Northern Mindanao, Carmen, Cagayan de Oro City, reserve the right to waive any defect or informality in the offers of bids, and rejects any or all bid proposal that may be deemed disadvantageous to the government.

For further information, please inquire from the Bids and Awards Committee, or its Secretariat at telephone no. 350-4325 / 726470 / 233-2306, or visit our website at www.chd10.doh.gov.ph or email us at chd_cdo@yahoo.com

July 22, 2005

(Sgd.) JULITO C. SABORNIDO, Jr., MD, MPH
OIC-Director

(PDI–July 27 & Aug. 3, 2005)

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

The country's leading newspaper is looking for:

DESK EDITORS

Qualifications:
- College graduate major in Journalism or any Social Sciences course
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- With at least 1 year experience in editing and designing/ layouting pages

Responsibilities:
- Coordinates news gathering activities
- Edits stories and designs the layout of newspaper pages

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE – ADVERTISING

Qualifications:
- College graduate preferably Marketing or any Business course
- Knowledge in basic computer operations
- Interpersonal skills, Report Writing skills, Presentation skills, Filing skills, Communication skills

Responsibility:
- Responsible for establishing and maintaining relationships with clients and ad agencies with the end view of soliciting ad placement to meet overall sales quota.

RESEARCH SECTION HEAD

Qualifications:
- College graduate
- 2 years experience in related or similar job
- 2 years management experience
- Computer skills (Windows, Word, Netscape, Explorer, Excel, Corel Draw, Powerpoint)
- Interpersonal Management / Team Building skills, Analytical skills, follow through skills
- Familiar with publishing industry

Responsibilities:
- Supervises the day to day operations of the Research Section by overseeing the gathering of statistics, reports, backgrounds and other reference materials requested by the Editorial and the writing of special reports and packaged information for publication

ACCOUNTING STAFF

Qualifications:
- College graduate major in Accounting
- 1 year experience in this job or other similar jobs
- Knowledge of basic accounting principles
- Knowledge of different entries in the check voucher
- Knowledge basic computer operation
- Accounting skills, Report Writing skills, Ability to prepare check, Interpersonal skills, Filing skills

PERSONNEL ASSISTANT

Qualifications:
- Graduate of Psychology or Behavioral Science
- At least 2 years experience in recruitment and selection
- Familiar with psychological tests
- Knows how to use office software
- Interpersonal and Communication Skills, Analytical Skills, Report Writing Skills

Responsibilities:
- To provide recruitment, selection and employment services and maintain an HR Information System

GRAPHIC ARTIST

Responsibilities:
- College graduate preferably Fine Arts
- With background in Computer, Photoshop, Pagemaker, CorelDraw
- Knowledgeable in manual and computer based illustration, page design and artwork skills
- 1 year experience as Graphic Artist

Send your application letter and comprehensive resumé or e-mail to:

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Chino Roces Avenue (formerly Pasong Tamo)
Corner Yague and Mascardo Streets,
Makati City

E-mail: recruitment@inquirer.com.ph

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☎ 912-9008-11 Fax 912-9011
SM MEGAMALL, MANDALUYONG CITY
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OBITUARIES

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845-2334 to 38; 845-2440

"I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."
John 14:6

HERMILANDO "KA EMING" C. ALCALA

now peacefully rests in the Grace and Goodness of our Lord on July 25, 2005 at the age of 82.

His loving family, relatives and friends request to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at his residence in Quezon Avenue Extension Cotta, Lucena City.

Mass will be held on July 29, 2005, 2:00 p.m. at St. Jude Thaddeus Shrine Cotta, Lucena City while the interment will be at the Lucena Memorial Park RedV, Lucena City.

"For You have delivered me from death and my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before God in the light of life." Ps. 56:13

In loving memory of

VICTORIA KATIGBAK AFRICA

December 23, 1921 – July 25, 2005

Mother, grandmother and sister.

Her children and their spouses **KARINA** and **MARIO** (†), **NESTOR** and **MADELON**, **GERRY**, and **RAMON** and **GENG**; her grandchildren **KRISTINE**, **KARLA**, **KATRINA**, **RYAN**, **JET**, **WESLEY**, **CHESCA**, **MIKO** and **MIGUEL** and her sisters **CORAZON TUAZON**, **LOLENG ATIENZA** and **PAZ AFRICA**; other relatives and friends request you to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the SAN LORENZO CHAPEL of the STA. MARIA DELLA STRADA PARISH, Katipunan Ave. cor. Pansol St., Loyola Heights, Quezon City. (Chapel is open from 5:00 a.m. to 12:00 midnight.)

Interment will be on Friday, July 29, 2005, at the Loyola Memorial Park, A. Bonifacio Ave., Tañong, Marikina City, immediately after the Holy Mass at the San Lorenzo Chapel at 9:00 a.m.

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CIPRIANO S. GABA

of Naujan, Oriental Mindoro

*Peacefully joined our Creator and his wife **Janet Clark Gaba** on July 23, 2005 at the age of 72.*

His loving children **Manet & Rey**, **Boy & Lorna**, **Beng & Ogie**, **Yeng & Gary**; grandchildren **Chuckie**, **RJ**, **Klark**, **Allei**, **Nicholas**, **Pao & Patricia**; brothers and sisters **Manuel & Joanne**, **Celso** (†) & **Evelyn** (†), **Nora & Leleng** (†), **Patty & Kelly**, **Mila & Romy**, **Mutya & Nestor**; nephews, nieces and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on July 28, 2005 (Thursday), at the Holy Cross Memorial Park, Novaliches, Quezon City after the 8 a.m. Mass at the Arlington Chapels.

"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."
Matthew 11:28

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Carolina Diesta Deduque

of Bacon, Sorsogon

*Peacefully joined her Creator and her loving husband, ex-Mayor **SALVADOR DEDUQUE** on July 24, 2005 at the age of 84.*

Her bereaved family: children **MA. THERESA & JOSE**, **EDELMIRA & MEL**, **AURORA & ROGER JR.**, **DENNIS & MA. EVELYN**, and **DORAY**; grandchildren, great grandchildren, brothers & sisters, nephews & nieces, and other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for her eternal rest and everlasting happiness.

Interment will be on Monday, August 1, 2005 at the Bacon Catholic Cemetery after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at the Our Lady of Annunciation Parish Church, Bacon, Sorsogon.

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CLASSIFIEDS

Ariel Sta. Ana: A small town boy band member hits it big

ARIEL Sta. Ana

YOU won't miss his imposing figure on stage as a member of the CCP's Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra's (PPO) woodwind section. At 5"11, Ariel Sta. Ana seems indifferent and cold, but this pony-tailed guy is actually as shy and soft as his voice, as he candidly talks about his childhood.

"Actually, my family hails from Cardona, Rizal," says the 36-year old Sta. Ana, a principal clarinet player of the PPO, and the first featured artist for the CCP 2005 Filipino Artists Series slated on July 27. Although born in Quezon City, his musical upbringing started with his father's community band, the Banda 5 of Cardona, which was founded in 1904. "My father was against my joining the band," he chuckles. "Mahirap daw ang buhay ng isang musician at ayaw niya na danasin ko yon."

However, music must have been in his blood, as his cousins, members of his mother's family-owned Sarreal Band in Quezon City, and an uncle, also a clarinet player and a member of the Philippine Army Band, started teaching him secretly how to read notes and play the instrument (clarinet). "Everytime, I go to Quezon City, tinuturuan nila ako," Sta. Ana reminisces. So, at age 12, he joined the band as a clarinet player against his father's wishes." Gusto ko sana sa brass section, trumpet or trombone (as his father was), kaya lang napunta ako sa clarinet." Sta. Ana states.

When he won the National Music Competitions for Young Artists (NAMCYA) in 1988 (2nd prize) and in 1992 (1st prize), his father gave in to his interest. "But you see, my father told me, "Gusto ko gumawa ka ng pangalan sa clarinet, hindi lamang sa banda o bilang musician." That must have been a tall order for this young man, so he pursued further studies at the Elizabeth University of Music in Hiroshima, Japan where he earned his Master of Music degree in Clarinet Performance in 1996 and later his Master of Music degree in Orchestra Conducting in 1999. It was here that he met his future wife, Yuka. He also wanted to join the distinguished Hiroshima Wind Orchestra, known for its strict musical standards. "Di nila ako tinanggap," he grins. But after one year of trial studies, he eventually became the only Filipino member of the orchestra for two years. While there, he attended the clarinet classes of renowned French clarinetist Michael Arrignon. Since 1993, Sta. Ana has been a member of the Hiroshima International Music Friendship Club, which he helped found, and regularly performs in International Music Festival held in Hiroshima every October.

For promising music students, Sta. Ana has this to say: "Practice discipline, perseverance, be more responsible and hard-working," he states. "In fact, why not practice 25 hours a day?," he laughs. For his FAS concert on July 27, he will present the standard clarinet pieces he performed in Japan, and will be assisted by renowned Filipino pianist and UST Conservatory of Music Dean Raul Sunico. Following him in the succeeding FAS concerts are tenor Abdul Candao (Aug. 31), marimba player Dena Fernandez (Sept. 28) and pianist Mary Anne Espina (Nov. 23).

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In support for the **Call Center Conference and Expo 2005** the **Inquirer National Classifieds** will release on **August 19, 2005** a special tabloid-sized pullout section featuring CCAP news, activities and job advertisements.

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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Department of Transportation and Communications
LAND TRANSPORTATION FRANCHISING AND REGULATORY BOARD
East Avenue, Quezon City

NISSAN CAR LEASE PHILIPPINES, INC.,
Applicant.

Case No. 2003-0998

x ———————————— x

AMENDED DECISION

Before this Board is an Amended Application for Increase of Rates (Taxi Coupon Service) with Request for Provisional Permit or Authority, dated 25 May 2004, which was filed on 28 May 2004 by Applicant Nissan Car Lease Philippines, Inc. praying that the present rate of Taxi Coupon Service in the amount of Twenty One Pesos (Php 21.00) per kilometer based on Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) approved distance from Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NIAA) to specific destination points be increased to Thirty Three Pesos (Php 33.00) per kilometer.

The factual backdrop is recapitulated as follows:

Originally, applicant filed on 19 March 2003 an Application for Increase of Rates (Taxi Coupon Service) with Request For Provisional Permit or Authority seeking that the present rate of Twenty One Pesos (Php 21.00) be increased to Thirty Pesos per kilometer based on MIAA approved distance from NAIA to specific destination points.

However, said original Application mentioned in the preceding paragraph did not prosper for lack of legal requirement and on 28 May 2004 said Amended Application was filed.

On 14 June 2004, the Chief of Legal Division, this Board, issued a Notice of Hearing and applicant was required to publish such Notice of Hearing once in one (1) Manila-edited newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

Hearing for the presentation of the jurisdictional requirements was set on 8 July 2004. On 28 June 2004, applicant filed a Motion for the Issuance of Second Notice of Hearing which the Board granted but the same hearing was reset as per request of applicant to 15 July 2004, which hearing was again reset to 22 July 2004.

During the 22 July 2004 hearing, applicant presented in evidence its Exhibits "A" to "D" (Jurisdictional Facts) and thereafter prayed for a general default for all oppositors who failed to appear in this hearing which the Board granted. However, considering that the Solicitor General had previously filed his Opposition to the Amended Application, dated 13 July 2004, he was not included in the said Order. Nevertheless, since a Board Resolution authorizing Cecilia Vinoya to file the Amended Application had not yet been complied with including the submission of the Certification for Non-forum Shopping, applicant was required to submit both documents on or before 23 July 2004. The hearing was reset to 10 August 2004.

On 10 August 2004, the hearing was postponed to August 26, 2004 as per verbal request of applicant. However, on the same date, applicant submitted its Manifestation and Reply to Opposition.

The 26 August 2004 hearing was again reset to 14 September 2004. And in the hearing of 14 September 2004, applicant requested that it be given ten (10) days therefrom to file Position Paper in lieu of the direct testimony of its witness subject to cross-examination by the Solicitor general and such Position Paper would be submitted on or before 24 September 2004 and with or without said pleadings filed, this case would be submitted for resolution.

On 24 September 2004, applicant filed its Position Paper with Formal Offer of Evidence. Likewise, on the same date, the Solicitor General filed his Manifestation and Motion praying that in lieu of Position Paper, he was adopting its Opposition, dated July 13, 2004, as his Position Paper.

There being no more pleading needed to be filed, this case is ripe for decision.

On 12 May 2005, the Board issued a Decision granting with modifications the instant Petition filed. The said Decision did not become effective because the same was not published as required.

Applicant mainly anchored its Application for Increase of Rates (Taxi Coupon Service) on the ground of substantial increase of the prices of fuel, equipments, spare parts, cost of labor, electricity, rentals and other increments in the operation of the service, which the Board takes judicial notice of. It submitted Exhibits "L" to "O" to justify its case.

Applicant also added that it operates the service in NAIA twenty four (24) hours a day to serve arriving passengers from the first flight to the last flight. Thus, it caters only to a limited class of passengers who are mostly in the economic A and B classes. The relatively high fare for coupon taxi is compensated by the amenities in the service, and the safety and comfort it provides for its passengers.

Corollary to the above, applicant was constrained to apply for an increase of fare rates for Coupon Taxi Service in order to continue its adequate, efficient, comfortable and safe service to the riding public.

The Office of the Solicitor General opposed such view in its Opposition. It averred, among other things, that applicant failed to show any specific data, including studies/projections, on why the present fare rates are no longer economically viable and how the increase in prices of fuel and spare parts have affected the viability of its operations. The OSG added that the proposed increase appears to be burdensome and excessive to the riding public, particularly considering the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) who avail of the coupon taxis.

The focal point of the approval or denial of an Application for an Increase of Rate is not only to recover costs. Approval or denial of such Application must go beyond determining whether a fare change is justified based on cost and revenue analyses. Fare setting should be undertaken in the context of a variety of larger policy issues such as service, driver and vehicle qualities. A fare increase can be harnessed and of a great help to guide and provide better service quality, which will surely benefit the riding public.

As gleaned from the above, the declarations of the applicant boil down and are attributed to only one cause, that is, oil price hikes in the market. Operators and drivers suffer much the harsh effects of the oil price hikes. Thus, any applicant for an increase of fare rate has the primordial objective to necessarily recover the costs of investment. Hence, this Board finds for the applicant.

It is very imperative to mention that this Board approved the Fare Increase for Public Utility Bus (Ordinary) and Public Utility Jitney Services and the Fare Increase for Airconditioned Taxi Service. The bases for said Decisions were successive increase of fuel, spare parts, tires and other operational expenses. Other factors that were considered were the depreciation of rolling stocks, peso devaluation and increase of government fees.

The transport industry has absorbed increased operating costs as well as seen a decline in real revenue due to inflation. As a result, the real earnings of operators and drivers have declined substantially.

Furthermore, coupon taxi operators have improved the quality of vehicles placed into service in the airports to meet the standards for airline operations. Such improvement has imposed a greater capital cost. The said operators also experience increased and additional costs in every facet of their operations. Booth, parking and concession fees are charged by the Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA). The Department of Tourism (DOT) also accredits for a fee the units operating in the airports as accreditation would ensure safety and good service for the passengers, particularly the tourists. Drivers are also required to undergo training and seminar in compliance to DOT standards. In sum, high standards are required of to operate in the international airports.

In view of the above, herein applicant and all operators authorized to operate in NIAA merit an increased adjustment in their fare rate charges. Nonetheless, this Board grants the increase of rate reasonably, fairly and affordably to the end user who will utilize the services, and not solely as prayed for by the applicant. As posited by the OSG, a moderate increase in the fare rate should be sufficient and still bring a reasonably good return of investment for the coupon taxi operators.

WHEREFORE, in light of the foregoing and pursuant to and in accordance with Section 16 (c) of the Public Service Law and Section 5 (c) of Executive Order No. 202, the Board hereby GRANTS **WITH MODIFICATION** the Amended Application for Increase of Rates (Coupon Taxi Service) filed by herein applicant.

Accordingly, the Board authorizes the adjustment of fare rates for Coupon Taxi Service operating on the route: NAIA to any specific destination points and the same shall be subject to the following Fare Rate Structures:

a) Zonal Fare Scheme adjustment at 2.5-kilometer incremental radius to a point 30-kilometers from NAIA shall have the rates reflected under Annex "A", as an integral part of this Decision;
b) An incremental increase of P 42.22 (rounded-off to the nearest tens) at 2.5-kilometer intervals under a straight line method computation, as reflected under Annex "A" and an integral part of this Decision.
c) An incremental increase of P25.00 per kilometer from the limits of the 100-kilometer radius under a straight-line method computation, as reflected under Annex "B" and an integral part of this Decision.

All duly franchised Tourist Coupon Transport operators, who have complied with Memorandum Circular 2004-011 (Re: Reclassifying Tourist Transport Services) and are authorized to ply on the route: NAIA to any specific destination points, are deemed to have individually applied for an increase of rates and shall pay to the Board the corresponding Filing Fee for Increase of Rate in the amount of Five Hundred Ten Pesos (Php 510.00) and Legal Research Fee of Ten Pesos (Php 10.00) per Case Number, Forty Pesos (PhP 40.00) for Franchise Verification per Case Number, and Five Hundred Pesos (PhP 500.00) per Fare Guide which consists of twenty three (23) pages.

This Decision shall take effect fifteen (15) days following its publication in a newspaper of general circulation or the filing of three (3) copies hereof with U.P. Law Center, pursuant to Presidential Memorandum Circular No. 11, dated 09 October 1992.

SO ORDERED.

Quezon City, Metro Manila. JULY 21, 2005.

MARIA ELENA H. BAUTISTA
Chairperson

FELIX S. RACADIO
Board Member

GERARDO A. PINILI
Board Member

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Department of Transportation and Communications
LAND TRANSPORTATION FRANCHISING AND REGULATORY BOARD
East Avenue, Quezon City

ANNEX A

	CITIES/MUNICIPALITIES/DISTRICTS	Php
2.5 KM	**PASAY 1** VILLAMOR AIRBASE, RIVERA VILLAGE AIRMEN'S VILLAGE, PILDERA 1 & 2	P 150
	PARAÑAQUE 1 TAMBO, UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL MOONWALK 1, MULTI-1 (JERUSALEM ST TO TEL AVIV ST STO.NIÑO, DUTY FREE, CASINO PILIPINO BALTAO / OLD DOMESTIC / MIAA / CENTENNIAL TERMINAL 2	
5 KM	**PASAY 2** GSIS, SENATE, WTC FB HARRISON / TRAMO RUSSIAN & VIETNAM EMBASSY	P 330
	MAKATI 1 GLORIETTA, GREENBELT PARK LEGASPI VILLAGE, DASMARIÑAS VILL FORBES PARK (SOUTH), MAGALLANES	
	PARAÑAQUE 2 MULTINATIONAL VILL 2 (ALL OTHER STREETS REFER TO MULTI-1) BICUTAN INTERCHANGE, MOONWALK 2 PNCC, UNITED PARAÑAQUE, SM SUCAT DON BOSCO, SUN VALLEY, SAN DIONISIO BETTER LIVING / MERVILLE / BACLARAN MARCELO GREEN / KALAYAAN VILLAGE	
	TAGUIG 1 SIGNAL VILLAGE, BAGONG TANYAG, UPPER BICUTAN, FTI FT BONIFACIO (LAWTON AVE.) WESTERN BICUTAN	
	LAS PIÑAS 1 POBLACION, ILAYA (MARINE POND) MANUYO DOS	
7.5 KM	**PASAY 3** ASIA PACIFIC HOTEL, PASAY CITY ACADEMY PICC, WESTIN PHIL. PLAZA	P 440
	MANILA 1 HARRISON PLAZA, MALATE, CENTURY HOTEL CENTRAL BANK, FOLK ARTS AMBASSADOR HOTEL, ADRIATICO HOTEL SAN ANDRES BUKID	
	MAKATI 2 GUADALUPE, MAKATI CITYHAL CARMONA RACE TRACK (STA. ANA), OLYMPIA ROCKWELL, BEL AIR, URDANETA VILLAGE, SAN ANTONIO VILL FORBES PARK NORTH, SOUTH CEMBO, PITOGO PRIMETOWN CENTURY TOWER SUNRISE TOWER/JP RIZAL	
	TAGUIG 2 FT BONIFACIO (Market-Market) TUKTUKAN, STA. ANA, BAMBANG HAGONOY (BAY BREEZE VILL) LOWER BICUTAN, BAGUMBAYAN BAGONG TANYAG	
	PATEROS 1 STA. ANA SAN PEDRO, POBLACION AGUHO, MARTIREZ DEL '96	
	PARAÑAQUE 3 TAHANAN VILL , BF HOMES / HILLSBOROUGH CAMELLA HOMES PARAÑAQUE UNITED PARAÑAQUE 4, SUCAT PARAÑAQUE	
	LAS PIÑAS 2 BF INTERNATIONAL, BF EXECUTIVE VILL CAA 13 COMPUND, PAMPLONA UNO & TRES, TALON UNO & TRES ZAPOTE, PULANG LUPA	
	MUNTINLUPA 1 DONA ROSARIO HEIGHTS, POSADAS VILL DOÑA ROSARIO BAYVIEW, DON JUAN BAYVIEW	
	BACOOR (CAVITE) 1 ZAPOTE 1,2 &3	
10 KM	**MANILA 2** ERMITA, INTRAMUROS, PACO, PANDACAN MALACAÑANG, SAN MIGUEL LAWTON, CITY HALL (MANILA) MANILA HOTEL, PIER SOUTH PUNTA, BACOOD STA. ANA	P 530
	MANDALUYONG 1 MEGA MALL A & B, SHANGRI-LA PLAZA (EDSA) STAR MALL, MANDALUYONG CITY HALL	
	PASIG 1 KAPITOLYO, VALLE VERDE 1 PHIL SPORT COMM (ULTRA) BAGONG - ILOG, PASIG CITY HALL SAN JOAQUIN, PINAGBUHATAN, KALAWAAN	
	TAGUIG 3 NAPINDAN, TIPAS, PALINGON	
	MUNTINLUPA 2 ALABANG TOWN CENTER CUPANG, BULI, SUCAT RIZAL VILLAGE, DSWD ALABANG HILLS 1,2 & 3	
	LAS PIÑAS 3 ALMANZA, SM SOUTH MALL, TALON 2,4 & 5 PHILAMLIFE VILLAGE PILAR BF ALMANZA, PAMPLONA DOS	
	BACOOR (CAVITE) 2 SM BACOOR, TALABA, NIOG SAN NICOLAS, LIGAS, ANIBAN	
12.5 KM	**MANILA 3** PIER SOUTH, FT. NORTH HARBOR FORT SANTIAGO SAN NICOLAS, CUSTOMS, TUTUBAN DIVISORIA BINONDO, QUIAPO, STA CRUZ, STA. MESA	P 610
	QUEZON CITY 1 SANTOL, SM CENTERPOINT,PCSO, NEW MANILA CAMP CRAME, CAMP AGUINALDO GREEN MEADOWS, CORINTHIAN GARDENS UGONG NORTE	
	SAN JUAN GREENHILLS, WACK-WACK GREENHILLS LITTLE BAGUIO, PINAGLABANAN ALL PART OF SAN JUAN	
	MANDALUYONG 2 LA SALLE, WACK-WACK GOLF	
	PASIG CITY 2 ROSARIO, MAYBUNGA, SAN MIGUEL ADB, ROBINSO'NS, VALLE VERDE 2,3,4,5,6 MERALCO	
	MUNTINLUPA 3 FESTIVAL MALL, METROPOLIS BAYANAN, NEW ALABANG 1 AYALA ALABANG VILL 1 ALABANG GOLF COURSE	
	LAS PIÑAS 4 PILAR VILLAGE PHASE 4, BF CLASSIC HOMES SOLDIER HILLS II SUBD , METROCOR HOMES	
	BACOOR (CAVITE) 3 MOLINO 1,2, MAMBOG 1-5, BAYANAN HABAY, DULONG BAYAN, SALINAS, MABOLO	
	KAWIT 1 TOCLONG, LONGBALAY-LEGASPI, BISITA BALSAHAN PULVORISTA, SAMALA MARQUEZ, APLAYA TRAMO-BANTAYAN, KAUNLARAN	
	BINAKAYAN	
	IMUS REAL, PALICIO, POBLACION, TOCLONG, MEDICION	
	CAINTA 1 GREENWOODS EXECUTIVE VILL/DILANG CAINTA LIBIS/KAWAYANAN	
15 KM	**MANILA 4** GAGALANGIN (TONDO) SAMPALOC, NORTH & CHINESE CEMENTERY	P 670
	QUEZON CITY 2 LA LOMA, AMORANTO, KAMIAS, KAMUNING SACRED HEART, SAN FRANCISCO DEL MONTE STA. MESA HEIGHTS CUBAO ARANETA, PROJ 2,3,4 WHITE PLAINS, BAGUMBAYAN (LIBIS) BANAWE/WELCOME RTDA/GALAS/SCOUTS LTFRB-LTO/TIMOG-TOMAS MORATO	
	MARIKINA 1 INDUSTRIAL VALLEY	
	PASIG 3 SANTOLAN, MANGGAHAN, STA. LUCIA (DE CASTRO) EVER GOTESCO (ORTIGAS)/GREEN PARK (PASIG)	
	CAINTA 2 SAN ANDRES, STO NIÑO, STO DOMINGO SAN ROQUE, SAN JOSE, KABABAAN	
	TAYTAY 1 STA ANA, SAN JUAN	
	MUNTINLUPA 4 PUTATAN, POBLACION, NEW ALABANG 2 AYALA ALABANG 2, KATARUNGAN VILL NEW BILIBID PRISON, CAMP SAMPAGUITA CAMP BUKANG LIWAYWAY	
	BACOOR (CAVITE) 4 GAWARAN HEIGHTS, CAMELLA GARDENS QUEEN'S ROW, CAMELLA HOMES SPRING VILLE PHASSE II GARDEN VALLEY ASTROVILLE, BAHAYANG PAGASA, PROGRESSIVE VILL, MOLINO HOMES	
	IMUS 2 BAGONG SILANG, ESPELETA, PINAGBUKLOD, MAGDALO, MAHARLIKA, ANABU I, TANZANG, BAYAN LUMA, BUCANDALA CARSADANG BAGO, PAG-ASA, ALAPAN	
17.5 KM	**NAVOTAS 1** NORTH BAY BLVD., BANGKULASI	P 740
	MALABON 1 DAGAT-DAGATAN, LONGOS	
	CALOOCAN 1 MAYPAJO, OBRERO, GRACE PARK SANGANDAAN, MONUMENTO, BAGONG BARRIO WEST	
	QUEZON CITY 3 MUÑOZ, PROJ 6,7,8, BAGONG BANTAY, BAGONG PAG-ASA BALINTAWAK, BALONG BATO, BALINGASI, DAMAR, APOLONIO SAMSON, SAN ANTONIO, PALTOK, STO CRISTO DILIMAN VETERAN'S, UP VILL., TEACHER'S VILL SIKATUNA, KRUS NA LIGAS, UP CAMPUS, LOYOLA HEIGHTS HEART CENTER/BANGKO SENTRAL/WILDLIFE QMC MEMORIAL CIRCLE/SM WEST	
	MARIKINA 2 BARANGKA (RIVERBANKS), TAÑONG, J. DELA PEÑA CALUMPANG, STO NIÑO, STA ELENA, SAN ROQUE	
	PASIG 4 DELA PEÑA, KARANGALAN VILLAGE STA LUCIA MALL, ROBINSON'S PLACE (METRO EAST)	
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	IMUS 3 ANABU II, PASONG BUAYA 11, MALAGASANA	
	SAN PEDRO (Laguna) CUYAB, SAN ROQUE, POBLACION, STO NIÑO, NUEVA SAN VICENTE, TAT FILIPINAS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	
	CAVITE CITY	
20 KM	**MARIKINA 3** MARIKINA HEIGHTS, CONCEPCION 1,2 PARANG, MALANDAY, LAMUAN	P 790
	QUEZON 4 OLD BALARA, CULIAT, BAHAY TORO, MATANDANG BALARA, TANDANG SORA, SANGANDAAN, BAGONG BARRIO EAST TALIPAPA, BAESA/VILLA BEATRIZ SUBD.	
	VALENZUELA 1 MARULAS, KARUHATAN/FATIMA	
	CALOOCAN 2 STA. QUITERIA, TALIPAPA, BAESA	
	MALABON 2 POTRERO, TUGATOG, ACACIA, NIUGAN, LONGOS, MUZON, TINAJEROS, CATMON, MAYSILO, FLORES, SAN AGUSTIN CONCEPCION, TAÑONG, BABA, BARITAN, BAYAN-BAYANAN	
	NAVOTAS 2 DAANG HARI, SAN ROQUE, SAN JOSE, SIPAK-ALMACEN, NAVOTAS WEST	
	IMUS 4	
	NOVELETA	
	GEN. TRIAS	
	BIÑAN	
	ANTIPOLO CITY	
22.5 KM	**MARIKINA 4** PARANG, NANGKA	P 850
	SAN MATEO, RIZAL 1 SILANGAN, STO NIÑO, BANABA, AMPID 1	
	QUEZON CITY 5 MATANDANG BALARA, SAUYO MANGGAHAN, HOLY SPIRIT, FAIRVIEW BAGBAG, SAN BARTOLOME, STA. LUCIA EVER COMMONWEALTH/COA	
	VALENZUELA 2 GEN T DE LEON MAPULANG LUPA, PASO DE BLAS MAYSAN, DALANDANAN, RINCON, ARKONG BATO, MALINTA	
	MALABON 3 SANTOLAN, PANGHULO, DAMPALIT, HULONG DUHAT	
	NAVOTAS 3 TANGOS, TANZA	
	IMUS 5	
	ROSARIO	
25 KM	**OBANDO 2** PAG-ASA, PALIWAS	P 900
	VALENZUELA 3 BALANGKAS, POLO, PALASAN POBLACION, BISIG, MABOLO POSOLO, MALANDAY, VEINTE REALES, LINGUNAN CANUMAY, BAGBAGUIN, CANUMAY EAST, LAWANG BATO	
	CALOOCAN NORTH 1 BAGBAGUIN, KAYBIGA	
	QUEZON CITY 6 CAPRI, SAN AGUSTIN, COMMONWEALTH, STA. MONICA, SITIO GAO, PASON, PUTIK, PAYATAS, GULOD, LA MESA DAM, BAGONG SILANG FAIRVIEW MARKET	
	SAN MATEO, RIZAL 2 GITNANG-BAYAN 1,2 AMPID II, DULONG BAYAN 1, 2	
	MEYCAUAYAN 1 TOGATOG BANGCAL, CAINGIN	
	DASMARIÑAS	
	IMUS 6	
	GEN. TRIAS	
	TANZA	
	ROSARIO	
27.5 KM	**SAN MATEO, RIZAL 3** MALY, PATIIS, GUINAYANG, MALANDAY	P 940
	QUEZON CITY 7 REGALADO H-WAY, PASONG PUTTING, KALIGAYAHAN	
	CALOOCAN NORTH 2 BAGUMBONG, DEPARO, LLANO	
	VALENZUELA 4 BIGNAY, PUNTURIN	
	MEYCAUAYAN 2 LAWA, MALHACAN BAYUGO, HULO, SALUYSOY LANGOS, ZAMORA, PANDAYAN, LIBTONG, LANGKA	
	DASMARIÑAS 2	
30 KM	**CALOOCAN NORTH 3** CAMARIN, BAGONG SILANG, TALA	P 990
	MEYCAUAYAN 3 BAGBAGUN PEREZ, CAMALIG, PANTOC, BALAONGAN, IBA	
	MARILAO 1 LAMBAKIN, LIAS, SAOG, TABING-ILOG, POBLACION 1ST & 2ND ABANGAN SUR, ABANGAN NORTE, IBAYO, NAGBALON	
	SAN MATEO, RIZAL 4	
32.5 KM	**MARILAO 2** OTHER AREAS REFER TO MARILAO I	P 1060
35 KM	**RIZAL** ANGONO TERESA	P 1100
37.5 KM		P 1140
40 KM	**CAVITE** CARMONA SILANG	P 1180
	RIZAL MONTALBAN MORONG BINANGONAN	
42.5 KM	**CAVITE** MARAGONDON TRESE MARTINEZ	P 1220
	LAGUNA STA ROSA	
	RIZAL CARDONA	
45 KM		P 1270
47.5 KM	**CAVITE** NAIC	P 1310
	LAGUNA CABUYAO	
50 KM	**BATANGAS** TALISAY TANAUAN	P 1350
52.5 KM	**BULACAN** GUIGUINTO OBANDO PANDI BOCAUE	P 1390
	CAVITE INDANG	
55 KM	**BULACAN** MALOLOS BALAGTAS	P 1440
	LAGUNA CALAMBA	
	BATANGAS TANAUAN	
	RIZAL TANAY	
57.5 KM	**RIZAL** BARAS	P 1480
	BULACAN BULACAN PULILAN SAN JOSE DEL MONTE STA. MARIA	
60 KM	**BULACAN** CALUMPIT PAOMBONG	P 1520
	CAVITE AMADEO MENDEZ	
	RIZAL PILILIA	
	BATANGAS MALVAR	
62.5 KM	**BULACAN** PLARIDEL BALIUAG	P 1560
	CAVITE TAGAYTAY	
	LAGUNA LOS BAÑOS	
65 KM	**BULACAN** ANGAT BUSTOS HAGONOY	P 1600
	BATANGAS STO TOMAS	
67.5 KM	**BULACAN** NORZAGARAY SAPANG PALAY	P 1630

(Continued on Page B13)

CITIES/MUNICIPALITIES/DISTRICTS	Php
65 KM BULACAN	P 1600
ANGAT BUSTOS HAGONOY	
BATANGAS STO TOMAS	
67.5 KM BULACAN	P 1650
NORZAGARAY SAPANG PALAY	
85 KM BATANGAS	P 1940
LIAN NASUGBO ROSARIO SAN JOSE TUY	
CAVITE MAGALLANES	
PAMPANGA STO. TOMAS	
87.5 KM	P 1980
90 KM LAGUNA	P 2030
PAGSANJAN STA. CRUZ	
PAMPANGA MASANTOL	
92.5 KM BATANGAS	P 2070
BALAYAN IBAAN	
LAGUNA ALAMINOS	
PAMPANGA APALIT SAN FERNANDO STA. ANA	
95 KM BATANGAS	P 2110
TAYSAN	
LAGUNA MAGDALENA	
97.5 KM BATANGAS	P 2150
BATANGAS CITY	
PAMPANGA BACOLOR CANDABA	
100 KM QUEZON	P 2170
DOLORES	

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Transportation and Communications
Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board
East Avenue, Quezon City

ANNEX B

COUPON TAXI SERVICE
LTFRB-PRESCRIBED PROVINCIAL DESTINATION RATES

(100-kilometers radius from NAIA to any point of Luzon)

DESTINATION	KM		AMOUNT
ABRA			Php
BANGUED	422		11,186.00
BOLINEY	470		12,530.00
BUCAY	440		11,690.00
BUCTOC	467		12,446.00
DAGUIOMAN	479		12,782.00
DANGLAS	436		11,578.00
DOLORES	434		11,522.00
LA PAZ	436		11,578.00
LANGANGILANG	440		11,690.00
LAGAYAN	441		11,718.00
LANGIDEN	415		10,990.00
LICUAN	476		12,698.00
LUBA	473		12,614.00
MALIBCONG	495		13,230.00
MANABO	450		11,970.00
PENARRUBIA	424		11,242.00
PIDIGAN	454		12,082.00
PILAR	450		11,970.00
SALLAPADAN	459		12,222.00
SAN ISIDRO	428		11,354.00
SAN JUAN	453		12,054.00
SAN QUINTIN	407		10,766.00
TAYUM	427		11,326.00
TUBO	483		12,894.00
VILLAVICIOSA	444		11,802.00
ALBAY			Php
BACACAY	553		14,854.00
CAMALIG	597		16,086.00
DARAGA	537		14,406.00
GINOBATAN	521		13,958.00
JOVELLAR	568		15,274.00
LEGASPI CITY	553		14,854.00
LIBON	478		12,754.00
LIGAO	512		13,706.00
MALILIPOT	568		15,274.00
MALINAO	569		15,302.00
MANITO	581		15,638.00
OAS	508		13,594.00
PIO DURAN	451		11,998.00
POLANGUI	526		14,098.00
STO. DOMINGO	565		15,190.00
TABACO	558		14,994.00
TIWI	538		14,434.00
AURORA			Php
BALER	232		5,866.00
CASIGURAN	343		8,974.00
DILASAG	368		9,674.00
DINALONGAN	233		5,894.00
DINGALAN	185		4,550.00
DIPACULAO	244		6,202.00
MARIA AURORA	237		6,006.00
SAN LUIS	215		5,390.00
BATAAN			Php
ABUCAY	132		3,066.00
BAGAC	170		4,130.00
BALANGA	136		3,178.00
DINALUPIHAN	114		2,562.00
HERMOSA	112		2,506.00
LIMAY	184		4,522.00
MARIVELES	184		4,522.00
MORONG	170		4,130.00
ORANI	122		2,786.00
ORION	145		3,430.00
PILAR	139		3,262.00
SAMAL	126		2,898.00
SAYSAYIN	175		4,270.00
*BATANGAS**			Php
AGONCILLO	114		2,562.00
ALITAGATAG	124		2,842.00
*BALAYAN	92.5		
*BALETE	77.5		
*BATANGAS CITY	97.5		
BAUAN	133		3,094.00
CALACA	134		3,122.00
CALATAGAN	112		2,506.00
*CUENCA	75		
*IBAAN	92.5		
*LAUREL	80		
LEMERY	116		2,618.00
*LIAN	85		
*LIPA CITY	72.5		
LOBO	130		2,479.92
*MATAAS NA KAHOY	75		
MABINI	142		2,593.45
*MALVAR	60		
*NASUGBO	85		
PADRE GARCIA	110		2,450.00
*ROSARIO	85		
*SAN JOSE	85		
SAN JUAN	108		2,338.00
SAN LUIS	120		2,730.00
SAN NICHOLAS	116		2,618.00
SAN PASCUAL	136		3,178.00
SANTA TERESITA	124		2,842.00
*STO. TOMAS	65		
TAAL	117		2,646.00
*TALISAY TANUAN	50		
*TANAUAN	55		
*TAYSAN	95		
*TUY	85		

* Rates-Unless or otherwise specified under Annex A

DESTINATION	KM		AMOUNT
BENGUET			Php
ATOK	290		7,490.00
BAGUIAS	351		9,198.00
BAGUIO CITY	263		6,734.00
BAKUN	349		9,142.00
BOKOD	316		8,218.00
ITOGON	280		7,210.00
KABAYAN	345		9,030.00
KAPANGAN	297		7,686.00
KIBUNGAN	328		8,554.00
LA TRINIDAD	269		6,902.00
MANKAYAN	361		9,478.00
SABLAN	290		7,742.00
TUBA	268		6,874.00
TUBLAY	228		5,754.00
BULACAN			Php
*ANGAT	65		
*BALAGTAS	55		
*BALIUAG	62.5		
*BOCAUE	52.5		
*BULACAN	57.5		
*BUSTOS	65		
*CALUMPIT	60		
*GIGUINTO	52.5		
*HAGONOY	65		
*MALOLOS	55		
*MARILAO			
*MEYCAUAYAN			
*NORZAGARAY	67.5		
*OBANDO	52.5		
*PANDI	52.5		
*PAOMBONG	60		
*PLARIDEL	62.5		
*PULILAN	57.5		
REMEDIOS TRINIDAD	103		2,254.00
*SAN ILDEFONSO	77.5		
*SAN JOSE DEL MONTE	57.5		
*SAN MIGUEL	75		
*SAPANG PALAY	67.5		
*STA. MARIA	57.5		

* Rates-Unless or otherwise specified under Annex A

DESTINATION	KM		AMOUNT
CAGAYAN			Php
ABULUG	694		18,802.00
ALCALA	523		14,014.00
ALACAPAN	697		18,886.00
AMULONG	518		13,874.00
APARRI	596		16,114.00
BAGGAO	540		14,490.00
BALLESTEROS	687		18,606.00
BAGUEY	602		16,226.00
CAMALANIUGAN	586		15,778.00
CLAVERIA	615		16,590.00
ENRILE	507		13,566.00
FAIRE	543		14,574.00
GATTARAN	558		14,994.00
GONZAGA	619		16,702.00
IGUIG	508		13,594.00
LAL-LO	576		15,498.00
LASAM	602		16,226.00
PAMPLONA	655		17,710.00
PEÑABLANCA	489		13,062.00
PIAT	535		14,350.00
RIZAL	560		15,050.00
SANCHEZ-MIRA	637		17,206.00
STA. ANA	651		17,598.00
STA. PRAXEDES	599		16,142.00
STA. TERESITA	609		16,422.00
SOLANA	496		13,258.00
TUAO	538		14,434.00
TUGUEGARAO	489		13,062.00
SAN VICENTE	554		14,882.00
CAMARINES NORTE			Php
BASUD	344		9,002.00
CAPALONGA	325		8,470.00
DAET	337		8,806.00
IMELDA	349		9,142.00
J.PANGANIBAN	332		8,666.00
LOBO	321		8,358.00
MERCEDES	343		8,974.00
PARACALE	332		8,666.00
SAN VICENTE	342		8,946.00
STA. ELENA	257		6,566.00
TALISAY	333		8,694.00
VINZONS	330		8,610.00
CAMARINES SUR			Php
BAAO	466		12,418.00
BALATAN	504		13,482.00
BATO	485		12,950.00
BOMBON	427		11,326.00
BUHI	372		9,786.00
BULA	462		12,306.00
CABUSAO	413		10,934.00
CALABANGAN	425		11,270.00
CAMALIGAN	427		11,326.00
CANAMAN	434		11,522.00
CARAMOAN	567		15,246.00
GACHITORENA	607		16,366.00
GAINZA	429		11,382.00
GOA	487		13,006.00
IRIGA CITY	476		12,698.00
LAGONOY	295		7,630.00
LIBMANAN	413		10,934.00
LUPI	391		10,318.00
MIGARAO	432		11,466.00
MILAOR	423		11,214.00
MINALABAC	443		11,774.00
NABUA	478		12,754.00
NAGA CITY	433		11,494.00
OCAMPO	462		12,306.00
PAMPLONA	412		10,906.00
PASACAO	423		11,214.00
PILI	452		12,026.00
RAGAY	376		9,898.00
SANGAY	480		12,810.00
SAN FERNANDO	424		11,242.00
SAN JOSE	490		13,090.00
SIPOCOT	397		10,486.00
SIRUMA	490		13,090.00
TIGAON	480		12,810.00
TINAMBAC	442		11,746.00
CAVITE			Php
*ALFONSO	75		
*AMADEO	60		
*BACOOR			
*BINAKAYAN			
*CARMONA	40		
*CAVITE CITY			
*DASMARIÑAS			
*GEN. AGUINALDO	80		
*GEN. TRIAS			
*IMUS	17.5		
*INDANG	52.5		
*KAWIT			
*MAGALLANES	85		
*MARAGONDON	42.5		
*MENDEZ	60		
*NAIC	47.5		
*NOVELETA			
*ROSARIO			
*SILANG	40		
*TAGAYTAY	62.5		
*TANZA			
*TERNATE	70		
*TRESE MARTIREZ	42.5		

* Rates specified under Annex A

DESTINATION	KM		AMOUNT
IFUGAO			
BANAUE	347		9,086.00
HUNGDUAN	376		9,870.00
KIANGAN	327		8,526.00
LUGAW	321		8,358.00
LIMUT	293		7,574.00
MAYAOYAO	389		10,262.00
POTIA	436		11,578.00
ILOCOS NORTE			Php
BACARRA	508		13,594.00
BADOC	462		12,306.00
BAGUI	566		15,218.00
BATAC	484		12,922.00
BURGOS	549		14,742.00
CURRIMAO	464		12,362.00
DINGRAS	516		13,818.00
DUMALNEG	559		15,022.00
ESPIRITU	531		14,238.00
LAOAG CITY	498		13,314.00
MARCOS	527		14,126.00
NUEVA ERA	539		14,462.00
PAGUDPOD	574		15,442.00
PAOAY	483		12,894.00
PASUGUIN	518		13,874.00
PIDDIG	518		13,874.00
PINILI	471		12,558.00
SAN NICOLAS	497		13,286.00
SARRAT	507		13,566.00
SOLSONA	524		14,042.00
VINTAR	507		13,566.00
ILOCOS SUR			Php
ALILEM	340		8,890.00
BANAYOYO	369		9,702.00
BANTAY	419		11,102.00
BURGOS	387		10,206.00
CABUGAO	433		11,494.00
CANDON	360		9,450.00
CAOAYAN	423		11,214.00
CERVANTES	393		10,374.00
GALIMUYOD	362		9,506.00
G. DEL PILAR	374		9,842.00
LAPOG	426		11,298.00
LIDLIDA	375		9,870.00
MAGSINGAL	419		11,102.00
NAGBUKEL	382		10,066.00
NARVACAN	376		9,898.00
QUIRINI	408		10,794.00
SALCEDO	360		9,450.00
SAN EMILIO	371		9,758.00
SAN ESTEBAN	383		10,094.00
SAN ILDEFONSO	412		10,906.00
SAN JUAN	427		11,326.00
SAN VICENTE	410		10,850.00
SANTA	387		10,206.00
STA. CATALINA	410		10,850.00
STA. CRUZ	334		8,722.00
STA. LUCIA	338		8,834.00
STA. MARIA	370		9,730.00
SANTIAGO	359		9,422.00
STO. DOMINGO	414		10,962.00
SINAIT	441		11,718.00
SUYO	334		8,722.00
TAGUDIN	317		8,246.00
SIGAY	414		10,962.00
SUGPON	332		8,666.00
VIGAN	420		11,130.00
KALINGA-APAYAO			
BALBALAN	497		13,286.00
BULUNAO	500		13,370.00
CALANASAN	607		16,366.00
CONNER	571		15,358.00
FLORA	684		18,522.00
KABUGAO	612		16,506.00
LUBUAGAN	461		12,278.00
LUNA	687		18,606.00
PASIL	483		12,894.00
PINUKPUK	521		13,958.00
PUDTOL	672		18,186.00
RIZAL	532		14,266.00
STA. MARCELA	689		18,662.00
TABUK	511		13,678.00
TANUDAN	484		12,922.00
TINGLAYAN	439		11,662.00
LA UNION			Php
AGOO	249		6,342.00
ARINGAY	257		6,566.00
BACNOTAN	197		4,886.00
BAGULIN	202		5,026.00
BALAOAN	312		8,106.00
BANGAR	321		8,358.00
BAUANG	272		6,986.00
BURGOS	291		7,518.00
CABA	262		6,706.00
ROSARIO	229		5,782.00
SAN FERNANDO	282		7,266.00
SAN GABRIEL	291		7,518.00
SAN JUAN	291		7,518.00
SUDIPEN	253		6,454.00
TUBAO	266		6,818.00
LAGUNA			Php
*ALAMINOS	92.5		
*BAY	82.5		
*BIÑAN			
*CABUYAO	47.5		
*CALAMBA	55		
*CALAUAN	77.5		
CAVINTI	105		2,310.00
FAMY	138		3,234.00
*LOS BAÑOS	62.5		
LUISINIA	110		2,450.00
LUMBAN	119		2,702.00
MABITAC	137		3,206.00
*MAGDALENA	95		
MAJAYJAY	134		3,122.00
NAGCARLAN	117		2,646.00
PAETE	127		2,926.00
*PAGSANJAN	90		
PAKIL	129		2,982.00
PANGIL	132		3,066.00
*PILA	82.5		
RIZAL	112		2,506.00
*SAN PABLO	72.5		
*SAN PEDRO			
SINILOAN	135		3,150.00
*STA. CRUZ	90		
STA. MARIA	143		3,374.00
*STA. ROSA	42.5		
*VICTORIA	77.5		
MOUNTAIN PROVINCE			
BONTOC	398		10,514.00
BARLIG	408		10,794.00
BAUKO	410		10,850.00
BASAO	408		10,794.00
NATONIN	480		12,810.00
PARACELIS	493		13,174.00
SABANGAN	420		11,130.00
SADANGA	421		11,158.00
SAGADA	400		10,570.00
TADIAN	403		10,654.00

* Rates specified under Annex A

DESTINATION	KM		AMOUNT
NUEVA ECIJA			Php
ALIAGA	155		3,710.00
BONGABON	166		4,018.00
CABANATUAN CITY	134		3,122.00
CABIAO	130		3,010.00
CARANGALAN	208		5,194.00
CUYAPO	198		4,914.00
GABALDON	192		4,746.00
GAPAN	114		2,562.00
GEN. TINIO	134		3,122.00
GEN. M . NATIVIDAD	155		3,710.00
GUIMBA	174		4,242.00
ISIDRO	120		2,730.00
JAEN	122		2,786.00
LAUR	165		3,990.00
LICAB	173		4,214.00
LLANERA	165		3,990.00
LUPAO	186		4,578.00
MUÑOZ	168		4,074.00
NAMPICUAN	159		3,822.00
PALAYAN CITY	161		3,878.00
PANTABANGAN	194		4,802.00
PEÑARANDA	123		2,814.00
QUEZON	148		3,514.00
RIZAL	172		4,186.00
SAN ANTONIO	131		3,038.00
SAN JOSE CITY	180		4,410.00
SAN LEONARDO	124		2,842.00
STA. ROSA	128		2,954.00
STO. DOMINGO	160		3,850.00
TALAVERA	145		3,430.00
TALUGTOG	189		4,662.00
ZARAGOSA	171		4,158.00
NUEVA VIZCAYA			
A. CASTAÑEDA	184		4,522.00
AMBAGUIO	290		7,490.00
ARITAO	237		6,006.00
BAGABAG	288		7,434.00
BAMBANG	252		6,426.00
BAYOMBONG	268		6,874.00
DIADI	302		7,826.00
DUPAX DEL NORTE	249		6,342.00
DUPAX DEL SUR	245		6,230.00
KASIBU	285		7,350.00
KAYAPA	268		6,874.00
QUEZON	284		7,322.00
STA FE	217		5,446.00
SOLANO	273		7,014.00
VILLA VERDE	283		7,294.00
*PAMPANGA**			Php
ANGELES CITY	110		2,450.00
*APALIT	92.5		
ARAYAT	110		2,450.00
*BACOLOR	97.5		
*CANDABA	97.5		
FLORIDA BLANCA	111		2,478.00
GUAGUA	103		2,254.00
LUBAO (STA. CRUZ)	110		2,450.00
MABALACAT	105		2,310.00
*MACABEBE	80		
MAGALANG	101		2,198.00
*MASANTOL	90		
MEXICO	106		2,338.00
MINALIN	115		2,590.00
PORAC	113		2,534.00
*SAN FERNANDO	92.5		
SAN LUIS	102		2,226.00
*SAN SIMON	80		
SEXMOAN	107		2,366.00
*STA. ANA	92.5		
STA. RITA	102		2,226.00
*STO. TOMAS	85		
PANGASINAN			Php
AGNO	386		10,178.00
AGUILAR	215		5,390.00
ALAMINOS	278		7,154.00
ALCALA	206		5,138.00
ANDA	395		10,430.00
ASINGAN	219		5,502.00
BALUNGAO	212		5,306.00
BANI	361		9,478.00
BASISTA	200		4,970.00
BAUTISTA	202		5,026.00
BAYAMBANG	179		4,382.00
BINALONAN	210		5,250.00
BINMALEY	235		5,950.00
BOLINAO	285		7,350.00
BUNGALLON	211		5,278.00
BURGOS	310		8,050.00
CALASIAO	220		5,530.00
DAGUPAN CITY	237		6,006.00
DASOL	304		7,882.00
INFANTA	294		7,602.00
LABRADOR	253		6,454.00
LAOAG	198		4,914.00
LINGAYEN	250		6,370.00
MABINI	335		8,750.00
MALASIQUE	405		10,710.00
MANAOAG	213		5,334.00
MANGALDAN	291		7,518.00
MANGATARIM	291		7,518.00
MAPANDAN	233		5,894.00
NATIVIDAD	224		5,642.00
POZZORUBIO	224		5,642.00
ROSALES	190		4,690.00
SAN FABIAN	254		6,482.00
SAN CARLOS	225		5,670.00
SAN JACINTO	225		5,670.00
SAN MANUEL	216		5,418.00
SAN NICHOLAS	225		5,670.00
SAN QUINTIN	216		5,418.00
SISON	231		5,838.00
STA. BARBARA	225		5,670.00
STA. MARIA	228		5,754.00
STO. TOMAS	197		4,886.00
SUAL	270		6,930.00
TAYUG	212		5,306.00

* Rates specified under Annex A

DESTINATION	KM		AMOUNT
UMINGAN	209		5,222.00
URBISTONDO	208		5,194.00
URDANETA	207		5,166.00
VILLASIS	197		4,886.00
QUEZON			Php
ANTIMONAN	191		4,718.00
BALER	248		6,314.00
BUENAVISTA	248		6,314.00
CALAUAG	247		6,286.00
CANDELARIA	105		2,310.00
CATANAUAN	218		5,474.00
DOLORES	100		2,170.00
GEN. LUNA	208		5,194.00
GEN. NAKAR	162		3,906.00
GUINYANGAN	270		6,930.00
GUMACA	214		5,362.00
INFANTA	158		3,794.00
LOPEZ	234		5,922.00
LUCBAN	175		4,270.00
LUCENA	150		3,570.00
MACALELON	265		6,790.00
MAUBAN	202		5,026.00
MULANAY	290		7,490.00
PADRE BURGOS	185		4,550.00
PAGBILAO	160		3,850.00
PITOGO	240		6,090.00
PLARIDEL	203		5,054.00
REAL	127		2,926.00
SAMPALOC	131		3,038.00
SAN ANDRES	359		9,422.00
SAN ANTONIO	124		2,842.00
SAN FRANCISCO	524		14,042.00
SAN NARCISO	319		8,302.00
SARIAYA	122		2,786.00
TAGKAYAWAN	198		4,914.00
TAYABAS	161		3,878.00
TIAONG	116		2,618.00
UNISAN	216		5,418.00
RIZAL			Php
*ANGONO			
*ANTIPOLO			
*BARAS			
*BINANGONA			
*CAINTA			
*CARDONA			
*JALA JALA			
*MONTALBAN			
*MORONG			
*PILILIA			
*SAN MATEO			
*TANAY			
*TAYTAY			
*TERESA			

* Rates specified under Annex A

DESTINATION	KM		AMOUNT
TARLAC			Php
ANAO	146		3,458.00
BAMBAN	120		2,730.00
CAMILING	180		4,410.00
CAPAS	127		2,926.00
CONCEPCION	136		3,178.00
GERONA	164		3,962.00
LA PAZ	164		3,962.00
MAYANTOC	178		4,354.00
MONCADA	174		4,242.00
PANIQUI	166		4,018.00
PURA	165		3,990.00
RAMOS	173		4,214.00
SAN CLEMENTE	137		3,206.00
SAN MANUEL	183		4,494.00
STA. IGNACIA	170		4,130.00
TARLAC	146		3,458.00
VICTORIA	162		3,906.00
ZAMBALES			Php
BOTOLAN	220		5,530.00
CABANGAN	200		4,970.00
CANDELARIA	265		6,790.00
CASTILLEJOS	160		3,850.00
IBA	225		5,670.00
MASINLOC	253		6,454.00
OLONGAPO	150		3,570.00
PALAUIG	240		6,090.00
SAN ANTONIO	175		4,270.00
SAN FELIPE	190		4,690.00
SAN MARCELINO	170		4,130.00
SAN NARCISO	185		4,550.00
STA. CRUZ	280		7,210.00
SUBIC	143		3,374.00

Honda launches 1.5 VTEC Jazz, media challenge

THIS vivid blue Jazz has rear seats that can be folded in three ways.

By Tessa R. Salazar

THE JAZZ is now "dancing to a deeper beat." When the 1.3-liter Honda Jazz first rolled out a year ago, industry observers predicted it wouldn't be too long before a "bigger brother" would come out.

The market, particularly the younger, more sport-oriented customers, chanted for that variation, anyway. Honda, always happy to oblige buyers who have a need for more speed, now markets a 1.5-liter VTEC version of the Jazz alongside the original 1.3 iDSI (intelligent dual and sequential ignition) version.

And with that move, Honda engineers swear the bigger engine is just as frugal on fuel as its 1.3-liter version, and yet is more powerful. This is made possible with the variable valve timing and lift electronic control system technology (VTEC) that optimizes power for minimum fuel consumption. It has a maximum power of 110 ps at 5,800 rpm and a max torque output of 14.5 kg at 4,800 rpm.

The arrival of the 1.5 VTEC Jazz also coincided with the launch of the 7th Honda Media Challenge, a motorsport competition among media practitioners in the country. Arnel Doria, Honda Cars Philippines Inc. deputy head, said the FIA-accredited media challenge is held only in the Philippines, and even merited a page in the Asian issue of Newsweek magazine in 1999.

The 2005 Jazz VTEC Media Challenge would earn bragging rights for members of the champion team.

By popular demand

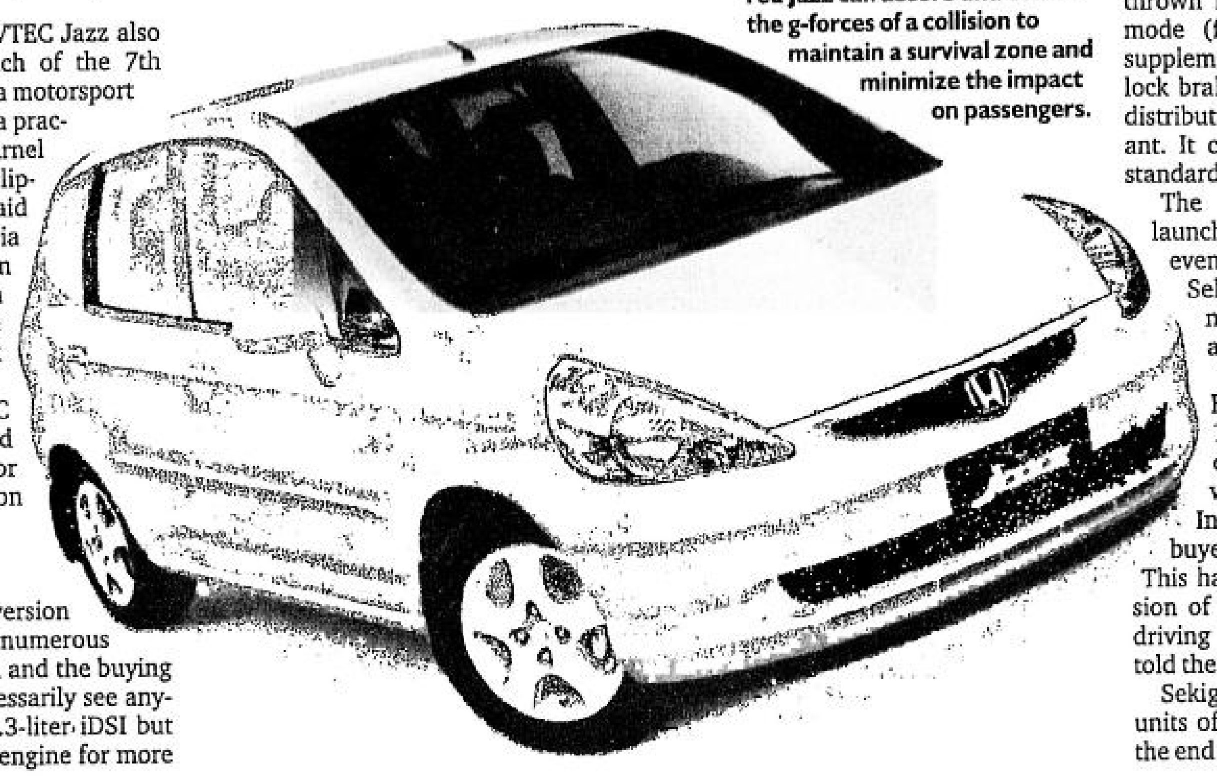
The 1.5-liter VTEC version got the go signal after numerous inquiries from the media and the buying public, which didn't necessarily see anything wrong with the 1.3-liter iDSI but clamored for a stronger engine for more "aggressive" Jazz drivers.

For good measure, Honda has also thrown in a Steermatic and a 7-speed mode (for fingertip command), dual supplemental restraint systems, anti-lock braking and electronic brake force distribution systems in the 1.5-liter variant. It complies with EURO4 emission standards.

The Jazz and media challenge launches have been the first major events of 46-year-old Takashi Sekiguchi, Honda Cars Philippines' new president and general manager.

"When Jazz was introduced, Honda chose to bring in the zippy 1.3 iDSI. Over the months, new demand emerged for small cars with a slightly larger power train. Interest is also growing among buyers looking for a sporty small car. This has led us to bring the VTEC version of the popular Jazz, with sportier driving characteristics and looks," he told the press.

Sekiguchi added that more than 1,800 units of the Jazz were distributed as of the end of June 2005.



ENGINEERS boast that this iris red Jazz can absorb and control the g-forces of a collision to maintain a survival zone and minimize the impact on passengers.

Can the tiny Legacy make a big splash in RP?

Text and photo
by Charles E. Buban

(First of two parts)

YOU can't help but notice this diminutive four-wheeler plying our streets. No bigger than a Kia Picanto or a Hyundai Getz, the Legacy looks more like a toy pickup truck especially if you consider its 0.660-liter gasoline engine, which is still a lot smaller than the 1.1-liter power plant of the two Korean mini cars.

Introduced late last year, the Legacy has made headway in attracting buyers despite the Filipinos' long held belief that small vehicles are cheap and unsafe.

Victor Ubaña, Legacy product managing head, relates that some of their buyers who had second thoughts on the vehicle, are now satisfied owners.

"Driving a Legacy may take some getting used to, but once you understand its limitations and adjusted accordingly, you'll appreciate the ride. It's one of a kind therefore, it may not logically be compared," says Ubaña.

Born out of necessity

According to Ubaña, the Legacy was born out of necessity. Here in the Philippines, and especially in the countryside, few individuals could afford a family car. They had to make do with motorcycles (or tricycles) or, at best, used vehicles.

"As things improve and incomes rise, some of these individuals later realize that their motorcycle or tricycle would no longer suffice and would long for something more substantial," he relates.

But since the budget of most of these individuals would still not be able to purchase "real" automobile, as we know it, Ubaña says the Legacy presents a more substantial alternative since it offers better protection from the weather, along with conventional seating.

"In fact, it may still be a better choice than having a used car that is already prone to repairs and therefore, costly to maintain," he says.

Fitting the bill

Legacy's manufacturer, Porta Coeli Industrial Co. (an affiliate of Norkis Group of Companies) believes that its latest product fit the bill of being a people's car.

The Cebu-based manufacturer may be right: The two-door, two seater Legacy First, which one can have for as low as P182,000 (the four-door, four seater Double Cab and the Van variants are priced P222,000 and 232,000, respectively), will fit the budget of most workingman.

"A year ago, former Trade Secretary Cesar Purisima urged vehicle manufacturers to bring in to the country small cars with engine displacement of 1,000 cc or smaller to lessen the country's fuel consumption," relates Norberto Quisumbing Jr., Norkis Group founder and chair.

The Legacy, which is essentially a reworked Daihatsu Mira, is Norkis Group's answer to that government's call.

Announcement welcomed

Quisumbing relates that they welcomed the announcement considering the government's call complements well to what Norkis has been doing for the past 12 years.

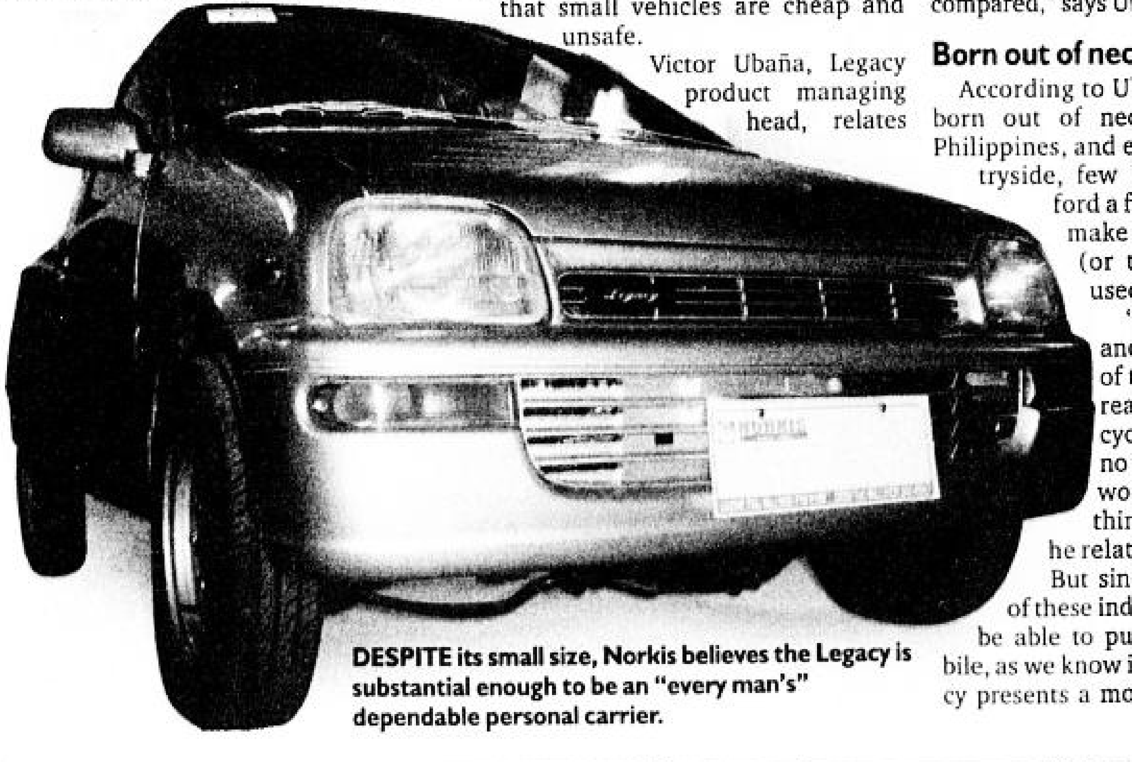
It was in 1993 when Quisumbing decided to bring in used 0.550-liter and 0.660-liter Daihatsu and Suzuki engines and parts, reengineered (full engine overhaul, parts replacements, new chassis and body fabrication, oven painting and detail assembly) road-tested and sold them initially in Cebu.

It turned out to be a success as the Multicab has become a popular mode of mass transport in several parts of the country, which even led Norkis to develop other variants.

"Although much smaller, the Legacy is no different from the Multicab as the vehicle is rebuilt from slightly used Suzuki or Daihatsu vehicles with mileage ranging from 30,000 to 50,000 km," says Quisumbing.

He, however, clarifies that the transformation of the Legacy from a used Japanese minicar is no ordinary feat as the company employed Filipino ingenuity to make the Legacy an almost new vehicle.

(Next: Employing Norkis' 5Rs)



DESPITE its small size, Norkis believes the Legacy is substantial enough to be an "every man's" dependable personal carrier.

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Guy cars and girlie cars

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

IN THIS world, whether you like it or not, there are guy cars and girlie cars—cars that more men buy than women, and vice versa. This fact is supported by sales data from NOP World, a market research firm, according to an article by CNN/Money staff writer Peter Valdes-Dapena last month.

Dapena says that the one common trait among cars that women like is that they are not expensive while men like expensive, fast cars. Dan Lienert of Forbes Magazine agrees: men love luxurious, high-performance cars while women buy cars that are affordable, practical and safe, albeit with a dash of design flair. Lienert notes that the average horsepower of the five most popular cars with men is 367. Also that while men are willing to buy girlie cars like the Mitsubishi Eclipse, women don't go for the extremely macho sports and luxury cars that men like.

Lienert's theory is premised on registrations of new 2005 and 2006 model cars in the United States from January to April this year. While the registration figures do not show who is driving the cars, it is the closest one can come to understanding gender demographics in new-car purchasing.

Guy cars

Based on the registration data, Forbes Magazine listed the five most popular cars with men. First on the list of guy cars is the $89,765 Acura NSX sports car with 100 percent of the registrants being male. No women registered a new Acura NSX in the United States in the first four months of 2005.

Second most popular with men is the $112,620 supercharged 493-hp V8 Mercedes-Benz S55 AMG, with 98.2 percent male registrants. The $82,296 Dodge Viper SRT-10 sports car, with 97.1 percent male registrants, is third. The Viper is raw, loud and uncomfortable, which is why women don't buy it, Lienert claims.

In fourth place is the full-sized $41,300 GM Yukon XL 2500 V8 SUV, which had 93.6 percent male registrants. The $76,995 Jaguar XJR placed fifth with 92.6 percent male registrants. The supercharged V8 XJR packs almost 100 more horsepower than the basic 294-hp XJ8, thus its popularity among men.

Most macho

CNN/Money, on the other hand, lists the $70,095-$190,785 Porsche 911 coupé as the most overwhelmingly macho car with an "Index Male to Total" of 214.3 while its "Index Female to Total" is just 14.3. CNN/Money ranked cars according to an index number representing how many men or women intend to buy that car and no other, compared to the percentage of their gender mates who intend to buy the average car.

Other brands topping the guy cars list are the $143,345, 500-hp V8 Ford GT supercar, $92,302 Maserati Spyder, $69,900 Jaguar XK8 coupé and the Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution, which, although much cheaper, is one of the fastest cars in the world.

Among women, the most popular car, per Forbes Magazine, is the tiny and cute $25,149 Mitsubishi Eclipse Spyder with 65.8 percent female registrants. The convertible had a longer list of female registrants than the hardtop model.

Girlie list

Next on the girlie car list is the $21,995 Saturn L300 compact with 64.0 percent female registrants. Third most popular among women, with 59.8 percent female registrants, is the $19,315 Toyota RAV4 compact SUV. Number four is the $19,699 Mitsubishi Eclipse coupé with 57.0 percent female registrants. The $27,495 Land Rover Freelander, another compact SUV, ranked fifth with 56.4 percent female registrants.

THE PORSCHE 911 is the most masculine car.

On CNN/Money's feminine cars list, the Pontiac G6 convertible was tops, with a "Female" index of 200. (Remember that in September 2004, TV megastar Oprah Winfrey gave away 276 brand-new Pontiac G6 sedans to her mostly female audience.)

Optra

The second most popular girlie car on the CNN/Money list is the $13,994 Suzuki Forenza (better known here as the Chevrolet Optra). The Volkswagen New Beetle convertible ($22,185 basic) ranked third, followed by the VW New Beetle compact, which sells at $17,185 basic. Ranking fifth is the Pontiac Sunfire coupé, which sells at $11,460 basic. The Mitsubishi Eclipse convertible is included in the girlie car list of CNN/Money as number seven.

Forbes concludes that the most feminine car brand in the United States is General Motors' Pontiac while the most masculine is DaimlerChrysler's Dodge, whose lineup includes the aggressively styled Ram pickup and Magnum muscle-car station wagon.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: Growing old is inevitable. Growing up is not.

* * *

(E-mail comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.ph.)

New cars for new customers

CATCH MY DRIFT

Andre Palma

I ALWAYS greet the launch of new vehicles with a mix of trepidation and expectation. Last week saw the debut of two cars that will probably make a significant difference to their manufacturer's bottomlines. Their impact on the motoring public goes beyond horsepower, foreign awards and leather seats; these will be tested in the near future where their relevance to the market can better be ascertained.

New products entering our beleaguered market must obviously find enough drivers who will be willing to make the substantial financial commitment of ownership. In an industry filled with multiple players servicing the diverse motoring needs of the public, from the super mini segment all the way to luxury SUV market, it is only logical for manufacturers to begin to niche.

It is quite amusing when I think of what showrooms looked like less than 20 years ago. Running up to the Nineties, buyers found themselves with only three realistic choices for a "new" car. This is obviously not the case anymore.

Even the basic formula of the small displacement family four door is getting stale these days, as there are actually more models and variants of new SUVs than new sedan. Even the humble AUV has become the flotation device for many a manufacturer's yearly sales volumes; survival is now gauged in Adventures and Innovas instead of Lancers and Corollas.

Wave of the future

Most recently, our shrinking capacity to buy has been met with increasingly smaller cars. Many must have thought that cars could not get more minute than the Third World market specific duo of the Vios and the City. Could it get any smaller? The Kia Picanto is the answer to that question and judging by the numbers plying our roads, people have accepted the car and the class in general.

A word of warning to the claustrophobic: this is the wave of the future. Even Japanese giant Toyota has decided to go smaller in Europe with a platform shared with Peugeot and Citroen. Research shows that the Aygo is supposed to slot in under the Yaris/Vitz/Echo in both pricing and size.

You must ask the question if Philippine buyers are really changing their purchasing habits or have the manufacturers educated and persuaded us to buy differently. Sadly, product education, despite the best implementation and recall, goes only as far as your market's ability to understand and afford.

Uninformed

I can preach about anti-lock brakes and brake force distribution systems until I'm blue in the face but the common Filipino driver could care less. A small personal survey of five drivers resulted in three not knowing how EDB (electronic brake force distribution) worked or if their cars actually had it.

How can a driver logically benefit from a system—he or she does not understand or know—that comes standard on their vehicles? If that is the case, why sell it at all as standard? Make it an option instead and this will make the prices of entry-level vehicles lower.

I will personally argue with any man who disputes price as the No. 1 consideration for the majority of the car-buying Filipino; only very few have the luxury to choose based on performance and marquee. This delicate price sensitivity is where the manufacturers can begin the education of Juan dela Cruz.

The market is in a position to be steered into new products and ideas, simply by tweaking prices in relation to the market. Lower prices can be used to sell value proposition products like bare basic cars and older designs. Conversely, price premiums can be used to dramatically highlight newer, better technologies. The Filipino consumer must be made to understand that they get what they pay for and this must be reinforced by their experience of ownership.

Greater demarcation

A simple solution would be a greater demarcation in the levels of trim found in model lines. If one buys an entry-level car, then one should be willing to forgo the flash and live with steel rims, the lack of a CD player and unpainted bumpers. Consumers who purchase all the bells and whistles must be rewarded, and not just by the relatively better vehicle that they just took home.

Value-added services are the key. Ideas like 24-hour roadside assistance, preferential treatment during the dealer service cycle and free registration assistance are already in practice and would not be hard to implement.

Novel ideas such as real-time traffic/direction assistance via text or automatic membership in a car club are examples of what could be explored. Small things such as these will definitely make customers relish ownership and hopefully develop some sort of brand loyalty, surely a critical factor that will be necessary in the bleaker economic future of our nation.

All the manufacturers have to do is look at the way the telecoms giants are marketing and selling their services and phones. The cell phone industry offers some of the most innovative ideas for customer service these days. The care and assistance that they provide is leagues ahead of the car companies; and this despite the fact that you spent substantially more to purchase your vehicle. Why does a P40,000 phone merit better customer care than a P400,000 super mini? Logically, it should not.

Welcome to our country, Sekiguchi-san

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

THE PRACTICE is for Japan-owned car companies here to be headed by a Japanese. Toyota, Honda, Mitsubishi and Nissan always have a Japanese for a president. Their tour of duty doesn't usually exceed five years. But when it's time to say goodbye, the farewell seems to be always tear-filled.

They have one common statement in their farewell speeches: "The Philippines is so nice I will miss it dearly. You are all veli nice, veli friendly, and I will miss you all dearly."

Others, like Nissan's Sekino-san, return and stay here practically for good.

Sekino-san, who has put up his own business here upon retirement from Nissan, was one hell of a guy when he was Nissan president. He ruled unorthodoxly. No strict rules to follow. Use your instincts was what practically characterized his reign, giving his staff the latitude to freely design their course of action. I like Sekino-san up to now if only because he drinks not coffee but beer in the morning.

"Coffee doesn't wake me up," he said one morning before we were about to tee off. "Beer does."

* * *

Takashi Sekiguchi has just arrived to assume his post as president of Honda Cars Philippines Inc. He replaced Takano-san, who had an otherwise unimpressive, if not forgettable, stint here.

Although boyish-looking and smile-prone, Sekiguchi, who turned 46 last Jan. 27, packs an inner wallop that should make the opposition shudder in his wake.

Before he was assigned here, Sekiguchi had been to two crucial postings where he made a spectacular accounting of himself on both occasions.

From 1996 to 2002, he was assistant manager (1996-98) and manager (1998-2002) of American Honda Motor Co. Ltd. headquartered in Los Angeles, California. The position also covered Canada.

When he arrived there, the annual sales of Honda in America was roughly 700,000. By the time he was rounding out his tenure, more than a million Honda units were being sold yearly. Some models, like the Odyssey and Accord, were consistent best-sellers.

"Hard work plus, of course, the quality of Honda caused the big jump in sales," said Sekiguchi.

After a brief stay at the Honda Motor Co. Ltd. in Japan as manager of the Automobile Product Planning Department for regional operations, Sekiguchi was sent to Thailand in 2003 as manager of the automobile division, covering Asean countries plus Taiwan, Pakistan and India. In only about two years, Sekiguchi made giant inroads in the region after which he was assigned here this year as president and general manager of Honda Cars Philippines.

"I find my new position as a new challenge considering the dynamic conditions in your country's automotive industry today," said Sekiguchi.

He noticed the unabated car smuggling in Subic as "rather odd" for a country that eagerly wants to jump-start its economic progress.

"In the other countries where I had been assigned," Sekiguchi said, "the government always exerted bold moves to curb car smuggling."

He said that for every car company to succeed in any country in the world, "the government should always be its No. 1 partner."

Alas, in this country, that seems to be the reverse. Billions of pesos in revenues are lost to smuggling every year.

Look, even the simple fact of vehicles not equipped with plate numbers on time is being blamed on car companies, if not car owners, instead of on government agencies.

Where in the world can you find such stupidity if not only in this benighted country of ours?

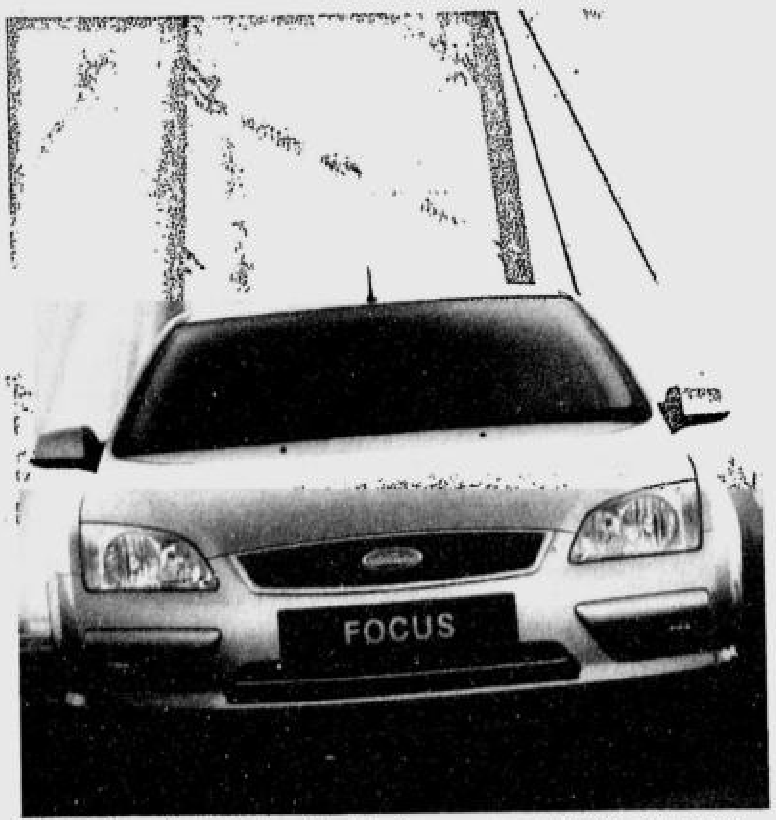
Anyway, good luck, Sekiguchi-san. I hope your track record of reaping one success after another doesn't get snapped here. With Arnel Doria and TinTin Reyes by your side, I'm sure you're going to go places as usual.

Good luck!

* * *

QUOTE ME. The rains contain acid, too. So have your car washed and wiped dry after it had gone through a downpour.

Focus test drive draws in the crowd; Ford Awards adds more categories



FOCUS has silver mesh grille with chrome surround; front and rear fog lamps; 16" machine alloyed wheels; 205/55R16 tires.

By Tessa R. Salazar

FORD Philippines' Focus public test drive held from July 22 to 24 attracted over 1,010 people at the Fort's NBC Tent in Makati.

The new Focus 4-door, 4-speed electronic automatic transmission sedan has sequential sport shift. It is equipped with a 1.8-liter inline four-cylinder DOHC engine. It has 125 ps at 6.000 rpm, and the max torque of 165 Nm at 4,000 rpm.

Ford Motor Co. boasts of Focus' shape as designed by Ghia House in Italy; safety tested at the Volvo Centre in Sweden; and precision-engineered in Germany. The WRC-patented control blade independent rear suspension, and stiff, new front chassis subframe promises smooth ride with precise cornering.

Short drive revelations

Drivers described afterward that the short drive revealed a sharp steering, a well-insulated interior and a small turning radius. Some unconventional controls greeted test drivers, too, such as the hood popper (which requires a key to open).

Focus was described by local car magazine C! as an "alternative to the Toyota Altis and a mature alternate to the Mazda3."

Meanwhile, motoring journalists have been given another "raison d'etre" to excel in their chosen profession.

The 2005 Henry Ford Awards was launched, signaling the start of the 5th edition of the journalistic competition.

New categories

Ford Group Philippines president Henry Co announced that this year's HFA adds new awards categories Environment and Conservation Feature Story, Safety Feature Story, and the Best Mazda Feature story. The Auto Industry was reclassified as a special category.

The introduction of the environment and road safety categories is in line with Ford's intensified "focus" on the two issues in its own corporate policies and programs.

From seven categories in 2001, the HFA has expanded to 12 categories, according to Ford Asean public affairs director Pauline Kee, who gave the keynote speech during the July 22 HFA launch event.

Ten of the 12 categories are not constrained to Ford and Mazda features. The categories are published photo for newspaper; published photo for magazine; auto event story; auto test drive; auto online feature; motoring column; environment and conservation feature; safety feature; auto television feature; and the special category on auto industry story.

From 48 entries submitted in its first year, the number has ballooned to 104 in the 2004 HFA, driven in large part by the P25,000 pot for each category, and long-term bragging rights for winning writers and photographers.

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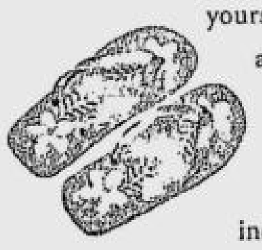

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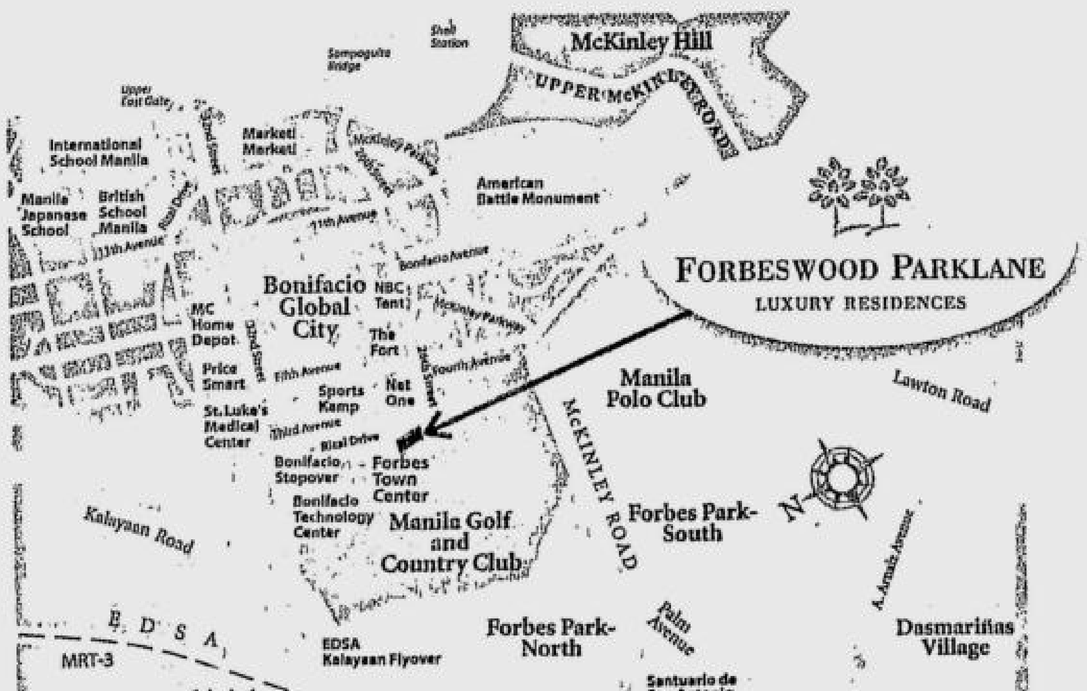
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UPPER McKINLEY ROAD
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Price Smart
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Fourth Avenue
Sports Kamp
Net One
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Lawton Road
St. Luke's Medical Center
Third Avenue
Rizal Drive
Bonifacio Stopover
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Kalayaan Road
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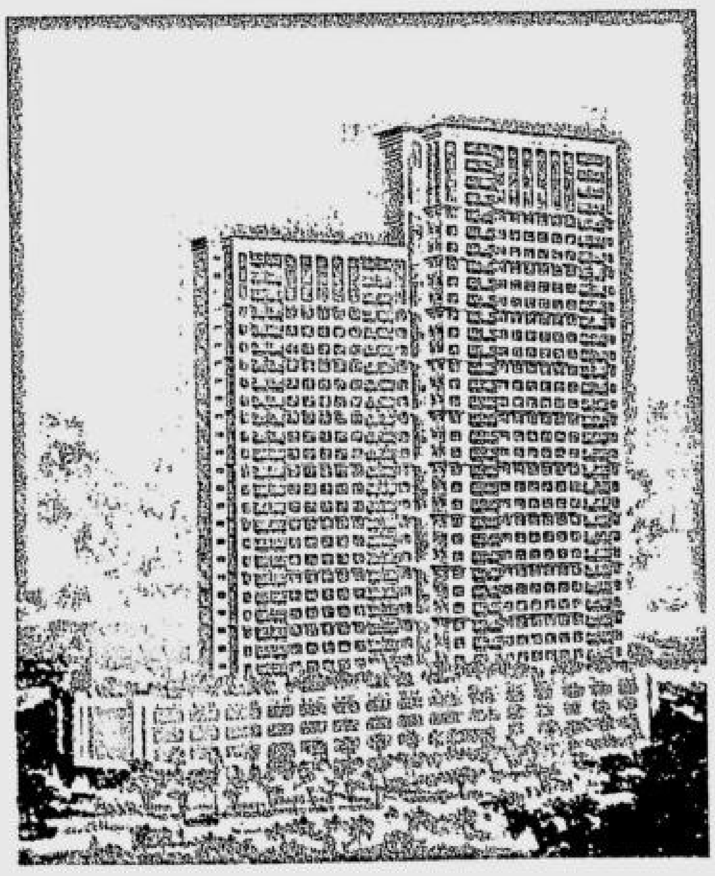

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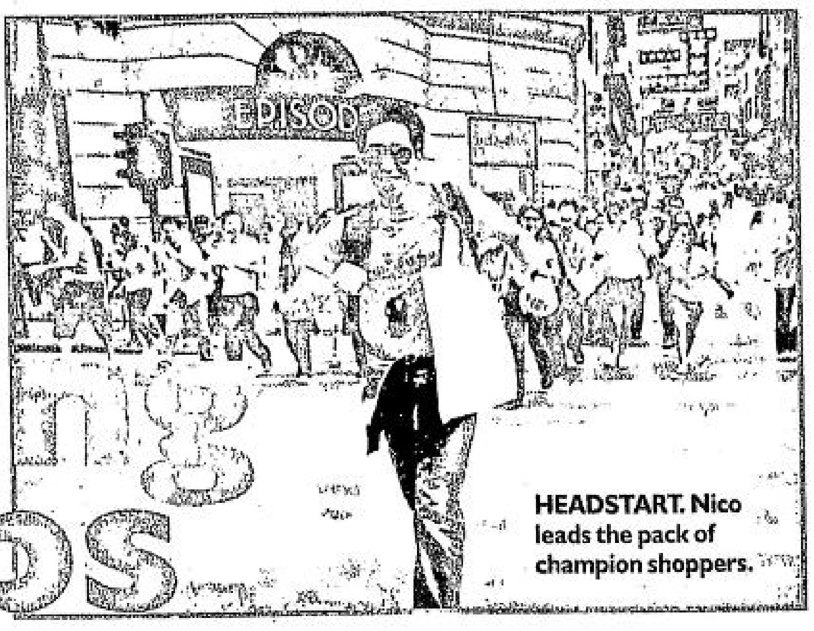
Chasing the shopping champs


HEADSTART. Nico leads the pack of champion shoppers.

TEAM Philippines. Cathy and Nico get ready to conquer the streets of Hong Kong.

Last week, 18 teams from all over the world came face to face in Hong Kong in a battle of great finds, bargains, wits and aching feet

By Pam Pastor
Photos by Rem Zamora

CATHY Avenido, 21, and Nico Manahan, 22, were looking troubled. They were in the middle of Chinese Arts and Crafts' Star House Branch in Hong Kong, standing in front of a majestic-looking imitation ivory sword with intricate carvings. A salesman was standing beside them.

They were haggling for the sword, which was originally HK$880 (around P6,160) and was being offered to them for HK$790.

"I know you can give us more discount," Nico said.

The salesman fidgeted, nervously looking at the cameras that were recording their exchange. "Sorry, no."

There was more to the fervent bargaining than just the reward of money saved. Cathy and Nico were competing to bag the top honors at the 2005 Hong Kong Shopper of the Year, now on its third year.

Go signal

Barely an hour earlier, they stood with teams from 17 other countries in Lan Kwai Fong, Hong Kong's nightlife hotspot, waiting for the go signal from Clara Chong, executive director of the Hong Kong Tourism Board. Each team had been given HK$3,000 (around P21,000) and four hours to buy one item each from four categories—Fashion and Beauty, Jewellery and Watches, Consumer Electronics and Chinese Traditions—from Quality Tourism Services-accredited outlets or 2005 Hong Kong Shopping Festival participating merchants.

Win or lose, the teams get to keep whatever they bought. Aside from the money, they were also handed survival kits (which included fans, raincoats, maps, band-aids, Octopus cards and petty cash worth HK$200 for food and drinks to aid them in their shopping) and Samsung digital cameras (which they would also bring home) so they could record their adventure and submit a photo for the Best Photo Category.

After the countdown and the confetti shower, teams started running to purchase their first item. Cathy and Nico, who were being tailed by cameramen, photographers including INQUIRER's Rem Zamora, Perceptions Inc.'s executive vice president Noel Nieva and this writer, led the pack down D'Aguilar Street and headed straight for the MTR. They consulted their map and got off at Tsim Sha Tsui. First stop was Chinese Arts and Crafts.

After hushed discussions, the two agreed to buy it at HK$790. The sword, which was their

CHASING/ C2

CATHY and Nico on their way to the first stop

OLIVER TO
5th Year BS Manufacturing Eng'g & Management
De La Salle University
Student Council Officer
NBA Games Aficionado

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2nd Year AB Economics Honors
Ateneo de Manila University
Dean's Lister & Commercial Model
Fashion & Music Lover

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PATRICIA EVANGELISTA
4th Year BA Speech Communications
University of the Philippines
Winner, 2004 International Public Speaking Contest in London & Studio 23 TV Host
Literature Addict

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2nd Year BA Architecture
University of Sto. Tomas
Student Council Officer
Badminton Enthusiast

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(FROM left) Shopper of the year contestants from the Philippines, United Kingdom, Italy, USA and Taiwan

Chasing the shopping champs

CONFETTI shower at the starting line

SCENES from the 2005 Shopper of the Year contest

NICO presents their imitation ivory sword to the judges.

CATHY talks about their photo entry.

FRANCESCA and Maria Giulia of Milan make a dress using silk, a table runner and a pair of scissors.

From page C1

entry for the Chinese Traditions category, was packed and wrapped. Soon, the two were off to their next stop—Watson's—where they bought an Innocare Ultra-sonic Multi-purpose cleaner. "It's a bargain," Nico said. "It was originally HK$428 (around P2,996) but it's now only HK$158."

They had been awake since 6 a.m. that day, spending the morning scouting for possible purchases for the competition. Still, their energy ran high. They jumped back into the MTR for their next stop: Mong Kok. They soon found themselves in Man Fook Gold and Jewellery Ltd. where they purchased a set of his-and-hers 18k white gold rings. Originally priced at HK$2,880 (about P20,160), they were able to buy it for HK$1,780. Then they had it engraved with the inscription: "Cathy & Nico—HK '05."

RP representatives

Cathy and Nico were chosen to represent the Philippines after beating the four other finalists of the 2bU! and HKTB search for the Philippine Shopper of the Year in the shopping showdown held in Eastwood earlier this month. The trip to Hong Kong was a milestone for the two, who have been a couple for over three years now. It was their first trip abroad together. They had met through Blue Babble Battalion, Ateneo's cheering squad.

After the rings were engraved, the two paused to take a photo. The photo of their hands set against one of their Shopper of the Year bags was going to be their entry to the Best Photo category.

They were tired but there was one category left—Fashion and Beauty. With barely HK$300 left in their budget and over an hour to spare, they took another MTR ride to Nathan Road. After visiting one boutique after another, their eyes landed on the big Esprit building. It was there that Cathy found a white polyester jacket she immediately fell in love with. "I'd buy it even if we weren't in the contest," she said. The best part? The jacket was 70-percent off.

The shopping spree was over. It was time to head back to the Collection Centre at Blues By The Bay in Tsim Sha Tsui where they would submit their purchases.

After each item was logged, bagged and sealed, Cathy and Nico were free to rest for the night. But the serious shoppers that they were, they still went shopping in Carnarvon Road after dinner.

Presentation

The next morning, all 18 teams arrived bright and early at The Peninsula Hong Kong for the judging session. They were to present their purchases and photo to the panel of judges which included Clara Chong; Alan Wong, general manager of Corporate Communications for Cathay Pacific; Tommy Li, chairman of the Pak Shing Tong Group; Winston Chow, governing council member of the Quality Tourism Services Association; Keith Chan, senior product manager of Samsung Electronics Hong Kong; Carollio Chow, director and general manager of Sun International Trading Co. Ltd., and Rowen Lau, marketing manager of Toppy Co. Hong Kong Ltd.

At the presentation, it became evident that there was more to the 2005 Hong Kong Shopper of the Year event than just shopping. Not only did the contestants' purchases show what they valued, the competition was also a celebration of relationships.

Like Gina Royden, the woman from Auckland, who bought an iPod for her 16-year-old son who entered her in the contest. And the girls from Korea who bought matching green shoes that they called "friendship shoes." Memorable, too, was the mother-in-law, daughter-in-law team from Sydney. The mother-in-law bought black South Sea pearl earrings for her daughter-in-law to match the bracelet and necklace she and her husband had given their new daughter-in-law when she married their son. "She's only been my daughter-in-law for three months," the woman said, tears welling up in her eyes as she recounted how her son and daughter-in-law stopped their wedding plans when they found out she had cancer.

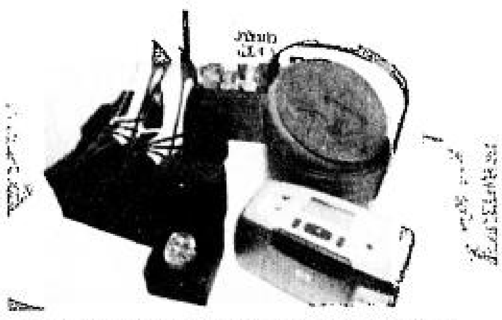
But not all presentations were tear-inducing. Other teams drew laughter from the audience, like the man from India who, before handing the microphone to his wife, said, "As usual, my wife will do all the talking."

Indonesia became a clear favorite after their hilarious skit. Venerdi Handoyo, with a camera in tow, pretended to interview Kenny Santana about his unbelievable feat of going around the world in four hours. This was how they presented their four purchases—Dolce & Gabbana stilettos, a Hewlett Packard portable printer, a Citizen diver's watch and an antique dimsum basket. "Dolce & Gabbana can do no wrong," Kenny said to the amused audience. "Hong Kong is a showcase of the world," he said. They received wild applause.

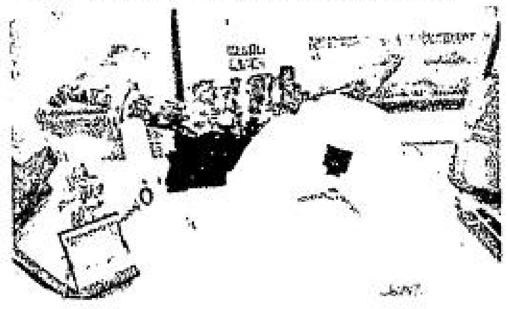
Lisa Nanette Bildstein and Brittnay Christine Bildstein, the mother-daughter team from Ohio, USA, were also well-applauded for their efforts in lugging around Hong Kong the huge air cooler they bought for Brittnay's dorm room. Lisa had sacrificed a lot to join the contest, even going to the extent of quitting her job.

CATHY and Nico at Watson's

THE WINNING photo

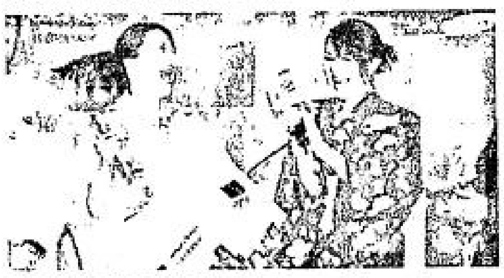


THE INDONESIANS' winning purchases



TEAM Philippines' entries

KENNY and Venerdi's hilarious presentation



CONTESTANTS from Japan rejoice after winning in the Consumer Electronics category.

CATHY and Nico are awarded the prizes for Best Photo.

Well-received

Cathy and Nico's presentation was well-received. Nico modeled the sword for the judges as Cathy talked about her desire to continue her mom's tradition of bringing home one memorable piece from every trip abroad. "When Nico and I have our own house, we're going to display it there and tell our grandchildren about the time we became shoppers of the year," Cathy said.

The rings drew excited gasps from the audience. Nico gave the judges a closer look at the engraving. And when their entry to the best photo category was flashed on the screen, the crowd dissolved into a series of "awwws." "This is really memorable for Nico and me. It's our first trip abroad as a couple and we're learning so much about each other," Cathy added.

When the host asked about her blog, she said, "We really, really love shopping, and I have a blog that's all about shopping. It's called, 'The Incurable Shopaholic,' because that's what I am."

Another unforgettable presentation was given by Francesca Siri and Maria Giulia Azario, fashion design students from Milan, Italy. They made a dress onstage using the silk they bought for the Fashion and Beauty Category and the table runner they bought for the the Chinese Traditions category.

The contestants all gushed about the great service they received in Hong Kong. "It's been brilliant," the couple from London said.

Everyone met again that afternoon at the Grand Ballroom of Kowloon Shangri-La for the Final Contest and Prize Presentation Ceremony. The contestants, who repeatedly said that the trip and the shopping spree were already prizes for them, were encouraged to be ambassadors of Hong Kong in their own city.

Winners

After a video show that featured the highlights of the previous day's shopping spree, winners for the different categories were announced.

Lisa and Brittnay from Ohio received a special award—the Most Dedicated Shoppers Award for their efforts in bringing around the huge air cooler.

Fashion design students from Milan Francesca and Maria Giulia bagged the Fashion and Beauty prize, winning beauty items sponsored by Bonjour Cosmetic.

For Jewellery and Watches, the Anne Klein watch with five interchangeable straps that was chosen by Jinda Lumnaotrakoon and Pranee Kerdmongkol from Bangkok won them the prize—a Citizen 1000M Professional Diver's Watch sponsored by Sun International Trading Co. Ltd.

The unbelievably small cube MP3 player that was chosen by Akiko Sato and Yuki Kato from Japan won in the Consumer Electronics category. They received a Samsung Notebook Q25 sponsored by Samsung Electronics Hong Kong.

Indonesians Kenny and Venerdi won in the Chinese Traditions category for the antique dimsum basket they bought. They were given a HK$10,000 gift certificate sponsored by Pak Shing Tong Group.

Cathy and Nico won the Photo Award and received HK$10,000 Colour Eighteen gift certificates sponsored by Toppy Co HK Ltd.

The five winning teams were all given leather handbags sponsored by Bean Pole, and certificates.

The contest was not over yet. The five final teams were asked to compete in two quiz-type contests. In the first one, teams were asked to guess the value of items flashed on the screen. Cathy and Nico won the first point for just being HK$25 short of the value of the fashion items. Thailand, Japan and Indonesia won the next three points, leaving Italy out of the running.

The final round proved to be more difficult. Photos of different areas in Hong Kong were shown and teams were asked to name which district or street it was.

Being the only team able to give a correct answer, Indonesia emerged as this year's Hong Kong Shopper of the Year, with Philippines, Thailand and Japan all tied in the first runner-up spot. Kenny and Venerdi were awarded two Cathay Pacific Business Class round-trip tickets to Hong Kong, a Samsung 40" LCD TV, a two-night stay in a Grand Deluxe Harbour View Suite and round-trip Rolls Royce transfer sponsored by The Peninsula Hong Kong, a helicopter flightseeing tour by Heliservices, a deluxe hamper from The Peninsula Shopping Arcade, trophy and certificates.

Cathy and Nico couldn't be happier for the winners, "We love them! They are extremely nice and funny, too! We got to talk to each other a lot of times during the competition. They truly deserved the grand prize."

Exciting days

Cathy and Nico spent their last day in Hong Kong shopping. They were still on a high after the excitement of the previous three days. "I feel grateful for being able to represent the Philippines in something I truly love, which is shopping. The whole experience was fun and exciting. I actually enjoyed presenting the items before the judges, the media and the rest of the audience. I enjoyed having their undivided attention!" said a thrilled Cathy.

More than just fun, the two believed their trip to Hong Kong taught them a lot of things.

"I definitely learned the concept of value for money," Nico said.

"I learned to be more independent. Between the two of us, I am the one more dependent on other people, like my family. But since they are not with me, I learned to depend on myself," Cathy added.

The trip also helped them discover more about each other. "We definitely know each other better," they said.

On their Cebu Pacific Business Class Flight back to Manila, Cathy and Nico were applauded by the plane's flight attendants and passengers. They may not have bagged the top prize but they're definitely big winners in our book.

The 2005 Hong Kong Shopper of the Year is part of the annual Hong Kong Shopping Festival which is ongoing until August. 31.

E-mail the author at ppastor@inquirer.com.ph

PARADISE for shopaholics. (Clockwise from bottom left) Fortune telling at Temple Street; the sign says it all; souvenirs at Stanley Market; sample of Shanghai Tang's Kung Fu Collection; Shanghai Tang's rich fabrics; shirts galore at the Ladies' Market; one of the many stores at Langham Place

Hong Kong Shopping 101

By Pam Pastor
Photos By Rem Zamora

WE went Hong Kong to document the adventures of the Philippine representatives to the Hong Kong 2005 Shopper of the Year Contest. Theirs was a tough challenge but I was facing a test of my own—making sure my budget stretched over the next four days of nonstop shopping.

It should have been difficult, but Hong Kong made it easy. Hong Kong is a real melting pot, even in the shopping arena. It doesn't matter how much you have in your pocket; there are great finds for everyone, in every price range.

Here's a list of places to visit the next time you find yourself in Hong Kong:

Stanley Market

Primarily a tourist area, Stanley Market is packed with overruns, Chinese artworks, toys, Bohemian clothes and lots of shoes. The Hong Kong heat may be tough to take a times but the stall are mostly air-conditioned even if their doors aren't closed. Prices are a little steep though, so get ready to haggle.

Ladies Market in Mong Kok

Still the ultimate Pinoy favorite, the Ladies market offers great bargains not just for ladies but for men too. It opens at noon (it's best to go there at 1 p.m. when all the stalls are already open) and closes after midnight. You can find bags, clothes, home décor, accessories, souvenirs for great prices. Merchants are eager to engage you in a bargain battle so play along.

Temple Street night market

At Temple Street, aside from shopping, you can have your future predicted by Fortune Tellers lining the street. Don't skip the stores blocked by the countless stalls—they are treasure troves for hot new finds like metallic bags and boho tops from Thailand.

> It doesn't matter if your budget is big or small. Shopping in Hong Kong offers great finds at great prices

Shanghai Tang

The Chinese luxury brand, with countless celebrity fans including Hilary Clinton, Margaret Thatcher, Richard Gere, Kate Moss, Naomi Campbell, Chow yun Fat, Nicholas Cage, Quentin Tarantino, is focusing its eyes on a younger market. Aside from its traditional Authentics collection, they have seasonal collections that will attract shoppers of all ages. Their theme for Spring Summer '05 was Chinese Opera. Next season, it will be Forbidden City. But our favorites are the new Kung Fu Collection, their tie-up with Puma and their iPod cases. Now that's Chinese chic for you.

Langham Place

One of Hong Kong's newest shopping havens, Langham Place offers 13 levels of temptation for any shopaholic. Explore the different floors and discover new stores. Patience is a key.

In Fashion

This retail store offers bohemian tops for HK$39, HK$49, HK$59 and HK$69. Just get ready to brave the crowd—and to buy without trying on the tops. (Clothes from certain racks are not allowed to be fitted.)

Causeway Bay

Causeway Bay offers the best of both worlds—mall-hopping and street-shopping. Go around the numerous malls in the area and when you're tired of them, visit the stores that line the streets. The best part—these stores stay open late, some of them until 1 a.m. or even later.

Sham Shui Po

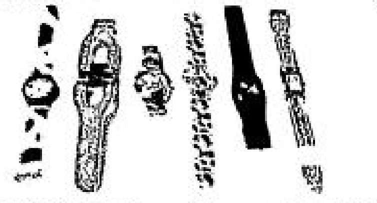
Don't let the word wholesale turn you off. Sometimes, buying three pieces is already considered wholesale in Sham Shui Po. With wholesale prices, tops that would originally go for HK$44 can go as low as HK$22. Haggle and turn on the charm. Our photographer Rem was allowed to buy three different models for wholesale prices when they found out he was from the Philippines.

Shopping tips:

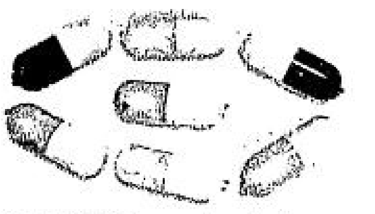
- Don't be afraid to haggle.
- Before leaving, go around malls in Manila to familiarize yourself with the prices. That way, you'll have a point of comparison when you're shopping in Hong Kong.
- Bring extra bags in your luggage for your purchases. You're going to need them.
- If you can't make it to this year's Hong Kong Shopping Festival, our tour guide William says the next best time to shop is Chinese New Year's Eve. During that night, merchants are eager to get rid of old stocks so they'd be willing to give in to your request for major discounts.
- One of the greatest things about shopping in Hong Kong is that every mall provides a directory of their shops. Grab one every time you enter a mall—it will make navigating easy for you.

Hong Kong finds

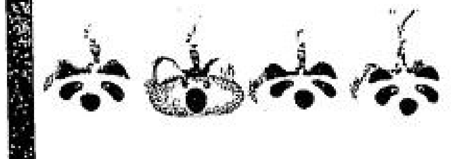
BAG addicts will go crazy over the countless bags in Hong Kong's numerous shopping areas.



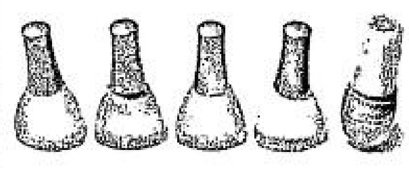
WATCH IT. Cute watches can be found in the malls and even in the markets and side stalls.



OVERSIZED capsules-slash-keychains, HK$6 each, Mong Kok



ANIMAL coin purse, Mong Kok



NEON nail polish. Prices range from HK$6 to HK$19 per bottle.

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MTV Philippines	One Bad Trip # 102	Making The Video: Jessica These Boot	MTV Get Spotted		Newlyweds # 301	Hangin Out at MTV		TRL		MTV Play		MTV Divas		MTV2 Playlistism	MTV Lokal Parokya ni Edgar	Dismissed # 618	Boiling Points # 204	MTV Play	VH1 Video Collections
MYX	Star MYX	Urban MYX	Rock MYX	OPM MYX	My MYX	Take 5	MYX Backtrax	MYX Firsts	Mellow MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		MYX Live!		My MYX	OPM MYX	MYX Backtrax	Mellow MYX
CNN		Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	Main Sail	World News Asia		Your World Today	
ESPN				Figure Skating		2005 WNBA Basketball				2005 WPBA Cuetec Cues Southeast Classic		Sportscenter Asia	World Snooker Tour Embassy World Champs						Sportscenter Asia
Solar Sports							IBF Malaysian Open '05						Sports Desk	WTA '05 Ladies German Open Berlin Final				Rocky Mountain Revue	
Sports Plus						FMX		Porsche Round 8	Pennsylvania 500 Highlights		The Search TV	World's Greatest Auto Shows		Nopi Tunerversion	BD Catalina	Tour De France			
Cinemax	Lethal Tender	Sex, Love And Cold Hard Cash			Julia Walking Home				Fever (7:25 PM)			The Bourne Identity				Dead Easy			
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Agency II		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Bewitched	The Nanny	Sue Thomas: F B Eye		Agency II		The Peacekeeper Wars			Strong Medicine (10:35PM)		Sue Thomas: F B Eye
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Untalkative Bunny	So Little Time	Buzz Lightyear Of Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Land Before Time IV: Journey Through Mists			So Little Time	Sabrina, The Animated Series	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Chip N Dale's Rescue Rangers	Land Before Time V: The Mysterious Island	
Discovery Channel		Science Mysteries		Science Frontiers		Destination Mars		The Chef Who Speaks To God		Rome- Lost City Of China		In The Wake Of The Junks		Mythbusters		Deadly Women		Crossings	
National Geographic		Showreel Asia		Going To Extremes		The Sea Hunters		Wildlife Detectives	Hayden Turner's Wildlife Challenge	Wow! Wild Dog Wilderness		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Showreel Asia		Going To Extremes	
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	Mucha Lucha!	Megas XLR	SD Gundam Force	Medabots	The Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Johnny Bravo	Time Squad	Thundercats	Mucha Lucha!	Megas XLR
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairly Odd Parents	Cow At The Moo-vies	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Yakkity Yak	Chalkzone	Rocket Power	Hey Arnold!	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	Rugrats
Lifestyle Network	Country Style	Interiors By Design	Decorating With Style	Decorating Cents	Molto Mario	Sweet Dreams	30 Minute Meals	Bill Boggs Corner	Unwrapped	Wolfgang Puck's	E! Entertainment Special The Next Wave		Life Is Great With Brooke Burke	Life & Style		Clean House		Breathing Room	Genuine Article
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Buffy The Vampire Slayer		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	One Tree Hill		Rockstar		JAG		Friends	One Tree Hill
AXN		The Amazing Race 6		Next Action Star		Ripley's Believe It or Not		PSI Factor (Season III)		Beastmaster		Ultimate Guinness World Records	Ultimate Guinness World Records	CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 5)				CSI: NY (Season I)	
JackTV	Banzai	X-Men	Justice League	Wwe Raw				Filter	Just For Laughs	Mad TV		Dr. Katz	Premium Blend	Shorties Watching Shorties	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Mad TV		The Sib Show	Street Smarts
ETC		Committed	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	Complete Savages	What I Like About You	Veronica Mars		Last Comic Standing		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
HBO	Only You (2:20 PM)			The Spitfire Grill (4:05 PM)				Decoy			Ghost Ship			The Boxer				Conspiracy Theory (10:50PM)	
Star Movies				Cube 2 Hypercube (3:55 PM)			Try 17			Daredevil (7:10PM)				Commander: The Far Side Of The World					Under The Tuscan Sun (11:20PM)
Cinema One		Like Father Like Son				Hinahanap-Hanap Kita		Isang Tanong, Isang Sagot			Persona	Cavalry Command				Minsan Lamang Magmahal			
EWTN	The Sacred Door- Lubes Story	Angelus (3:15 PM)	Refurbishing The Soul	Faith Factor C	Story Keepers	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	EWTN Catholic Classic	The Church And The Poor- Building Bridges	Mother Angelica Live Classics		Daily Mass Live		Angelus (9:15 PM)	One In Their Hearts Holiness Of Priesthood	Deep Conversation: Deep Prayer	The Virtues Seven Habits Of Champions	Web Of Faith	

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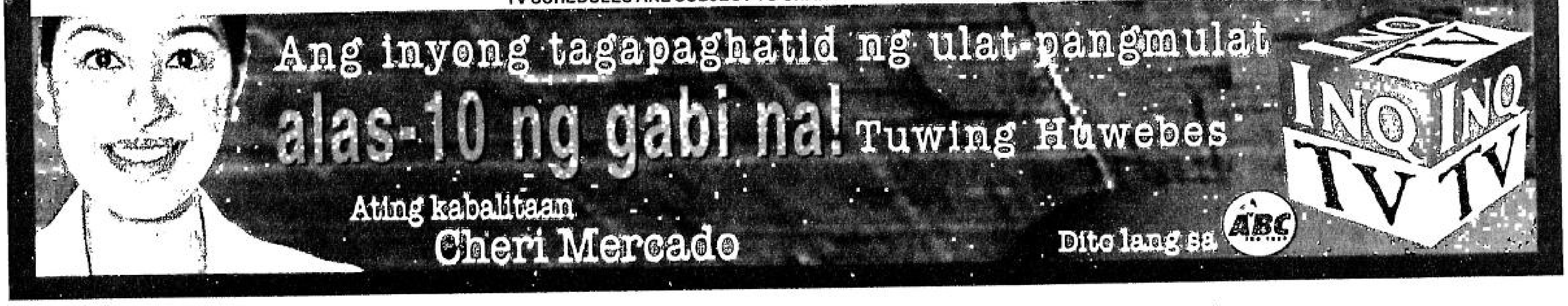
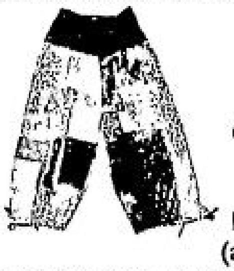

Ang inyong tagapaghatid ng ulat-pangmulat
alas-10 ng gabi na! Tuwing Huwebes
Ating kabalitaan
Cheri Mercado
Dito lang sa ABC
INQ TV

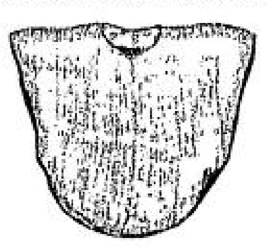
Hong Kong finds

Photos by Joseph Agcaoili and Rudy Esparza

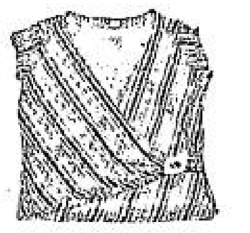
BARGAIN SHOPPING during the Hong Kong Shopping Festival is a breeze, thanks to the sales, the countless markets and back-alley stores and the merchants who are willing to give in to your haggling skills. Here are our favorite finds.



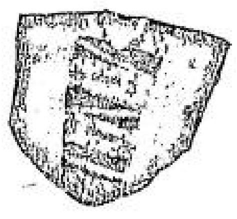
QUILT pants for HK$69 (around P480) found in a hole-in-the-wall in Causeway Bay



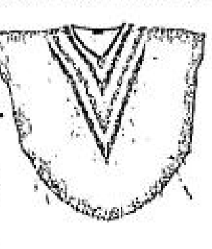
REVERSIBLE top, HK$70, Temple Street Market



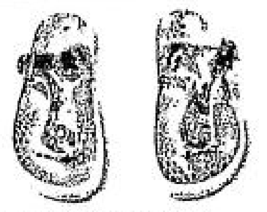
LAYERED top, HK$19, Sham Shui Po



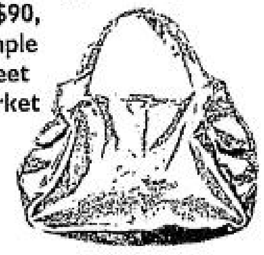
BOHEMIAN top from Thailand, HK$70, Temple Street Market



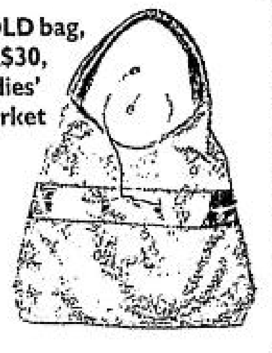
STRANGELY, there were a lot of clothes from Thailand in Hong Kong's night markets. Top, HK$70, Temple Street Market



THE NEXT big thing. Sequined thongs, HK$50. Every other girl in Hong Kong was wearing them.



METALLIC must-have. Metallic bags are big in Hong Kong. Pink bag, HK$90, Temple Street Market



GOLD bag, HK$30, Ladies' Market

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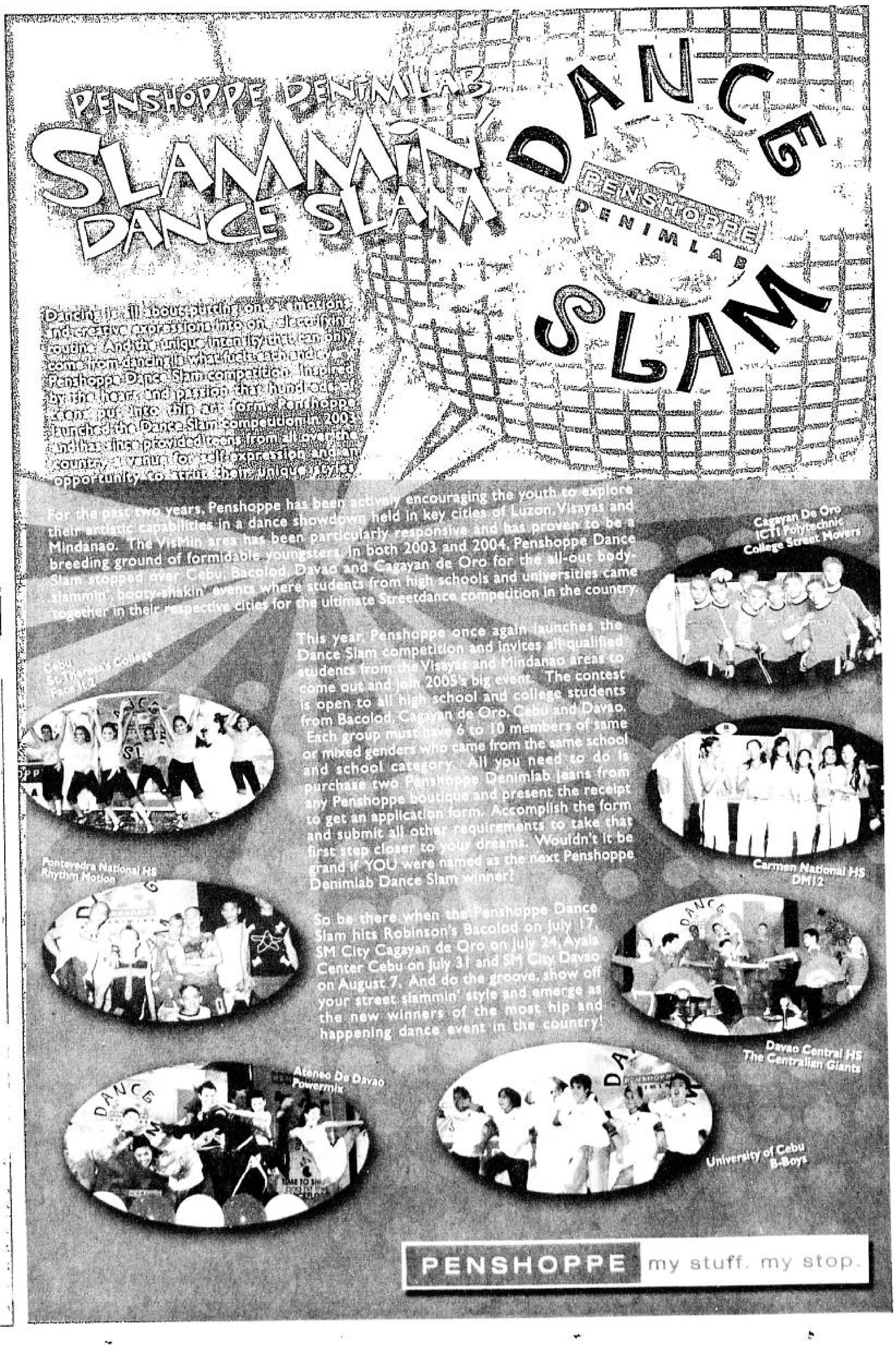
PENSHOPPE DENIMLAB
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DANCE SLAM
PENSHOPPE DENIMLAB
Cebu St. Theresa's College Face It 2
Cagayan De Oro ICTI Polytechnic College Street Movers
Pontevedra National HS Rhythm Motion
Carmen National HS DM12
Davao Central HS The Centralian Giants
Ateneo De Davao Powermix
University of Cebu B.Boys
PENSHOPPE my stuff. my stop.

Dancing is all about putting one's emotion and creative expressions into one electrifying routine. And the unique intensity that can only come from dancing is what fuels each and every Penshoppe Dance Slam competition. Inspired by the heart and passion that hundreds of teens put into this art form, Penshoppe launched the Dance Slam competition in 2003 and has since provided teens from all over the country a venue for self-expression and an opportunity to strut their unique styles.

For the past two years, Penshoppe has been actively encouraging the youth to explore their artistic capabilities in a dance showdown held in key cities of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. The VisMin area has been particularly responsive and has proven to be a breeding ground of formidable youngsters. In both 2003 and 2004, Penshoppe Dance Slam stopped over Cebu, Bacolod, Davao and Cagayan de Oro for the all-out body-slammin', booty-shakin' events where students from high schools and universities came together in their respective cities for the ultimate Streetdance competition in the country.

This year, Penshoppe once again launches the Dance Slam competition and invites all qualified students from the Visayas and Mindanao areas to come out and join 2005's big event. The contest is open to all high school and college students from Bacolod, Cagayan de Oro, Cebu and Davao. Each group must have 6 to 10 members of same or mixed genders who came from the same school and school category. All you need to do is purchase two Penshoppe Denimlab jeans from any Penshoppe boutique and present the receipt to get an application form. Accomplish the form and submit all other requirements to take that first step closer to your dreams. Wouldn't it be grand if YOU were named as the next Penshoppe Denimlab Dance Slam winner?

So be there when the Penshoppe Dance Slam hits Robinson's Bacolod on July 17, SM City Cagayan de Oro on July 24, Ayala Center Cebu on July 31 and SM City Davao on August 7. And do the groove, show off your street slammin' style and emerge as the new winners of the most hip and happening dance event in the country!

Content rules mobiles

WITH Darth Vader at the Communicasia Star Wars booth. Sony Ericsson has tied up with George Lucas' company for content.

Today's generation of mobile phones is all about multi-tasking

By Cheryl Tiu
2bU! Correspondent

SINGAPORE—Today's mobile phones are no longer merely utilized for their basic communication functions. Many users look for mobile content, which is fast gaining popularity.

Users may still look for ring tones, but they are also looking for gaming, especially with rapidly improving processing and phone displays; they also look for vibrant colors and vivid characters.

In fact, the Asia-Pacific region has brought the largest gaming revenues in the world, and the Philippines' wireless gaming market has a 77.7 percent annual growth.

Sony Ericsson is clearly aware of the trend. For example, for its recently launched K608, which is generally for businessmen, it has included a built-in golf game called VJ Singh Pro Golf.

"It really depends on the phone model and then we put in the game we deem will fit it accordingly," Tong Kai-Loong, Sony Ericsson Asia-Pacific's senior manager for product marketing, explains.

For themes and wallpapers, meanwhile, more colors and designs are employed for a younger audience.

Delivery

So how is the content delivered? Sony Ericsson has three options.

First, the contents can be embedded in the phones upon purchase. Second, on its website section (www.sonyericsson.com/fun) called Fun and Downloads, it has wallpapers, screensavers, themes and java games that users can download. Third, it has an icon on the mobile phone called PlayNow, a feature unique to Sony Ericsson. When one clicks on the icon, one immediately download 10 of the latest ring tones for a pre-listen. Once a user decides, he can simply click to download the feature to his phone; he will be charged in his phone bill carrier.

The Top 10 list of songs vary per location. While the PlayNow feature is currently for music, it will soon be introduced for games as well.

Popularity

The reason content is popular and important, Tong believes, is the personalization as-

CONTENT/ D2

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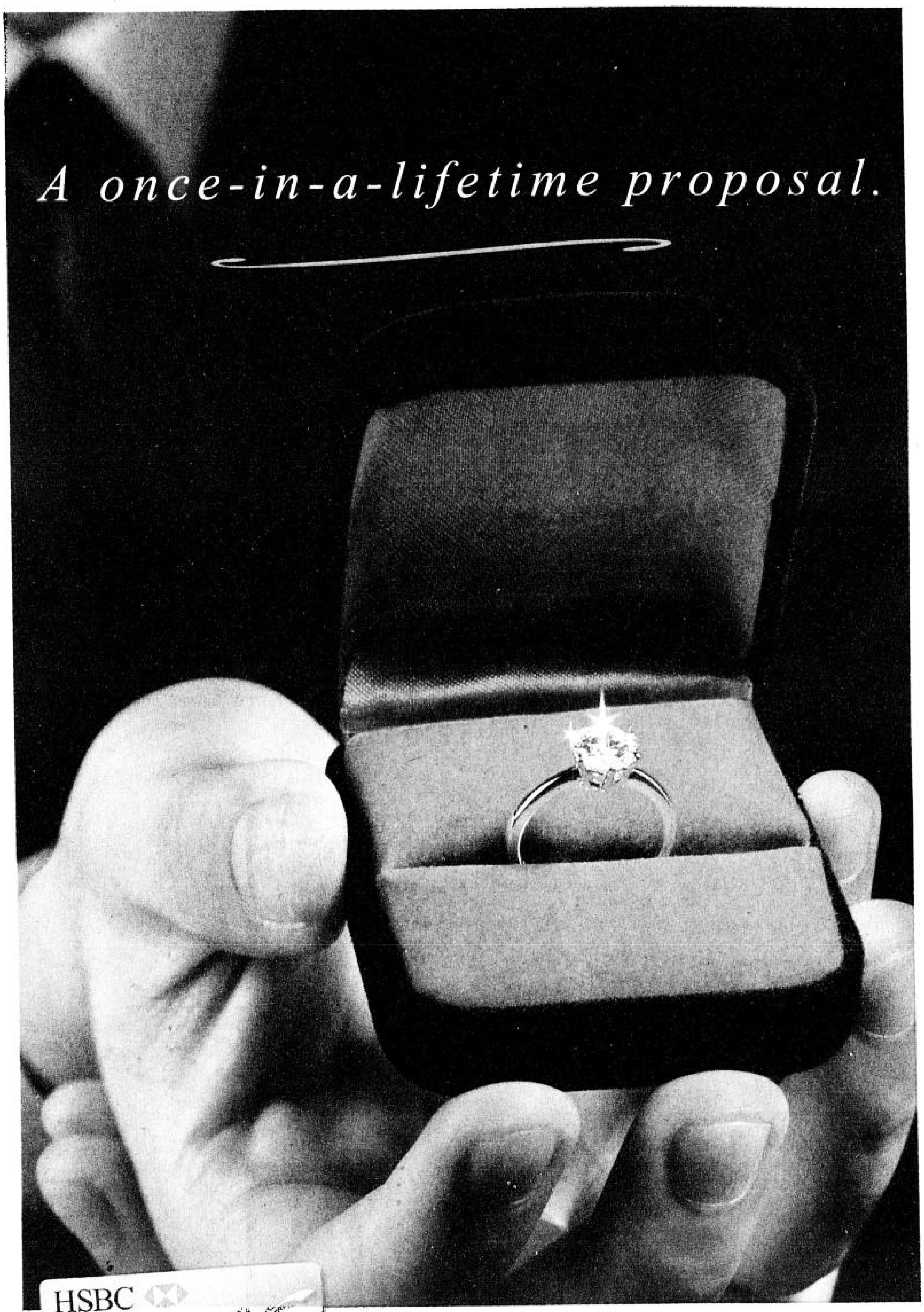

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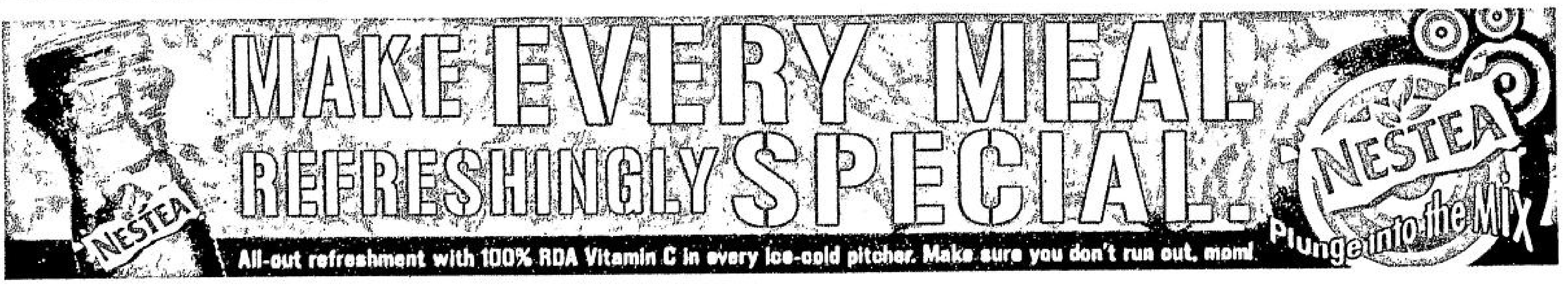
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Korea's top quality brand unveils its latest mobile handsets in Singapore

SGH-E760: With gesture recognition feature, this is perfect for lovers. (check out the design!)

SGH-Z130: Enjoy the view. Awesome rotating one-megapixel flash camera with 4x digital zoom. Swiveling LCD to enjoy viewing clips any way you like

Stylish mobile converge

By Tammy David
2bU! Correspondent

SAMSUNG recently invited members of the Philippine media and select distributors to "the most established and comprehensive communications/IT event in Asia" called Communicasia. The event, held in Singapore, was attended by thousands and had the top guns of the industry and different exhibitors showcasing the latest trends in mobile technology.

Newfangled gadgets such as megapixel camera phones, 3G applications and cutting-edge designs made the Singapore Expo a massive candy store, with visitors invariably drooling over the latest products.

Reinforcing its strategy of "Mobile Convergence," Samsung unveiled its latest mobile handsets featuring new technology (3G, HS-

D-TOUR: Danice Sison enjoying the Samsung expe

Content . . .

From page D1

pect that it brings.

"Content is about how you like to personalize your phone," Tong says. "It could vary from wallpapers to themes to screensavers to music to movies. As we move along, there are more phones and people want to do different things with their phones. So I think one of the ways to personalize phones to use it the way you like it is content."

While hardware customizations, like various cell phone and cases, are present, it is content that truly marks the user's identity in his phone.

"When you switch it on, you see the things you want to see," Tong says.

What Sony Ericsson does, though, to achieve this is to ensure it has the platform available for users to customize their phones.

Due to the growing popularity of content, other technologies will, of course, converge with mobile phones. One of the most vital ones is the camera.

"Cameras allow you to take pictures, which are your personally created content," Tong explains. "At the end of the day, we also view that content most relevant to users is the content they created—the pictures that they took."

Apart from new phones with two-megapixel cameras, Sony Ericsson also includes applications like Music DJs, which allow users to create their own ring tones; Photo DJ, which is like a simplified Photoshop where users can insert little icons into pictures; and a video software that allows basic video editing.

Of course, there will always be users who will require different extensions. There will be those who are more interested in music, others in imaging and gaming. That's why Sony Ericsson thrives on the continuous development of their wide range of phones.

With personal content customization, Sony Ericsson can authoritatively proclaim that it has something for everyone.

E-mail the author at chloe_dominique@yahoo.com

TONG Kai-Loong, Sony Ericsson Asia-Pacific's senior manager for product marketing

What is your mobile pho

By Cheryl Tiu
2bU! Correspondent

CHOOSING a mobile phone can be a daunting task. Finding the right model that suits your personality can sometimes leave you in a frustrating battle against indecision.

Recently, Sony Ericsson unveiled its four newest phone models in Singapore. With specific features designed for specific lifestyles, the new Sony Ericsson phones were clearly created with something for everyone in mind.

Take this quiz to find out which one best suits your personality and lifestyle.

1. You never leave home without your:
a. Swiss army knife
b. Laptop and PDA
c. Digicam and Ipod
d. Pet chihuahua, Tinkerbell

2. Your wardrobe revolves around:
a. Jeans
b. Polo shirts and khakis
c. Baseball cap and sneakers
d. Whatever's hot on InStyle

3. You enjoy watching:
a. Documentaries
b. Gangster/mafia films like "The Godfather"
c. Action-adventures or buddy cop films
d. Romantic-comedies

4. Your crush peeks into your room and is most likely to find:
a. A little night light right next to your bed
b. Yellow-marker-highlighted issues of The Economist (a product of leisure reading)
c. The Complete Arnold Schwarzenegger DVD box set
d. Colorful underwear strewn in the middle of the floor

5. When meeting new people at a party, your icebreaker line would be about:
a. The next Midnight Madness Sale
b. How shares of major airlines are tumbling due to skyrocketing oil prices
c. White-water rafting in Cagayan de Oro
d. The recently launched Shu Uemura Pink Sakura Cleansing Oil, Fresh

6. Your ideal vacation trip would include:
a. Enjoying a good book over a picnic meal in Tagaytay
b. An 18-hole golf game at the Trump National Golf Club in Los Angeles
c. Backpacking around Budapest, Prague and Bratislava
d. Front-row seats at New York Fashion Week

If you answered mostly A's

You're simple and straightforward. Practical and modest, you place greater importance on substance than style.

A practical entry-level phone, Sony Ericsson's J210 has a no-nonsense approach for people whose primary communication style consists of voice and basic messaging. This phone underscores simplicity and reliability as it combines practical ergonomics with a clear-cut interface. Designed with the fundamental voice communication in mind, speech clarity and clear ring tone speakers are emphasized for calls. This tri-band phone also has a bright 65K color screen, a phonebook with up to 200 entries and 600 KB user memory.

Mostly B's

Business-minded. You thrive on efficient multi-tasking and enjoy pronounced advancement in terms of tools and machinery. Committed to your work, you ensure that everything is done efficiently and accordingly.

Sony Ericsson's K608 was envisioned for businessmen (or budding businessmen). Though it supports the 3G UMTS services, its sleek and lightweight aluminum casing allows it to weigh the same as existing 2G phones (contrary to most bulky 3G handsets). It supports all major operators' 3G services like video conferencing and fast downloads of music, games, videos and other multimedia content.

Its intuitive dual front camera/phone design makes the handset a phone when it is vertical, and a fully featured 1.3-megapixel camera when it is horizontal. It also includes the Macromedia Flash Lite; high quality audio coupled with an FM radio and the ability to import music downloads direct to the phone; and 3D games like the Vijay Singh Pro Golf where you take on the role of a famous golfer and play 18-hole courses around the world.

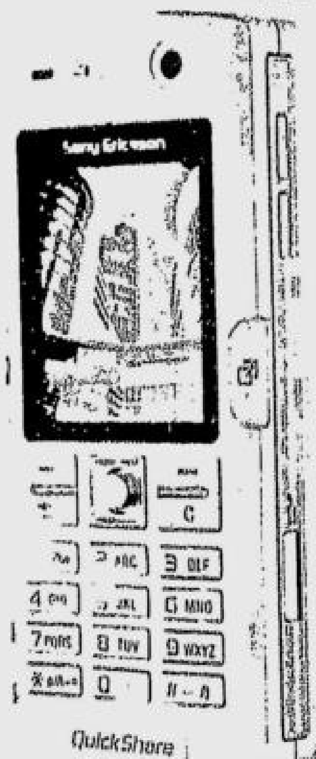
The phone's PlayNow feature also allows you to preview games or pre-listen to ring tones from a frequently updated selection and download into the phone's 32 MB memory, with an integrated billing system that automatically charges it to your mobile phone network.

Mostly C's

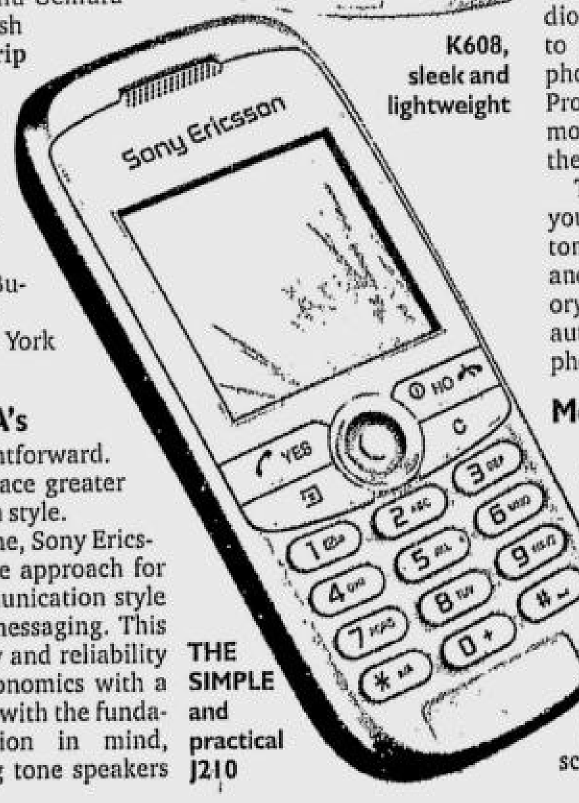
Adventurous. You're always on the go with your versatile lifestyle. You like trying out new things and have no hesitation in boldly expressing yourself.

The Sony Ericsson S600 is dubbed as the super play-phone. It has a versatile gaming style with which you can play games with a horizontal screen (upon flipping its orientation from the more conventional vertical/portrait mode) with enhanced wide-screen detail. The directional buttons on the

S600, the super play-phone



K608, sleek and lightweight



THE SIMPLE and practical J210

THE S600 play-phone

FLASHING his latest jewel

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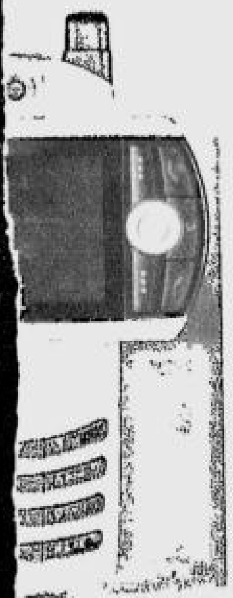

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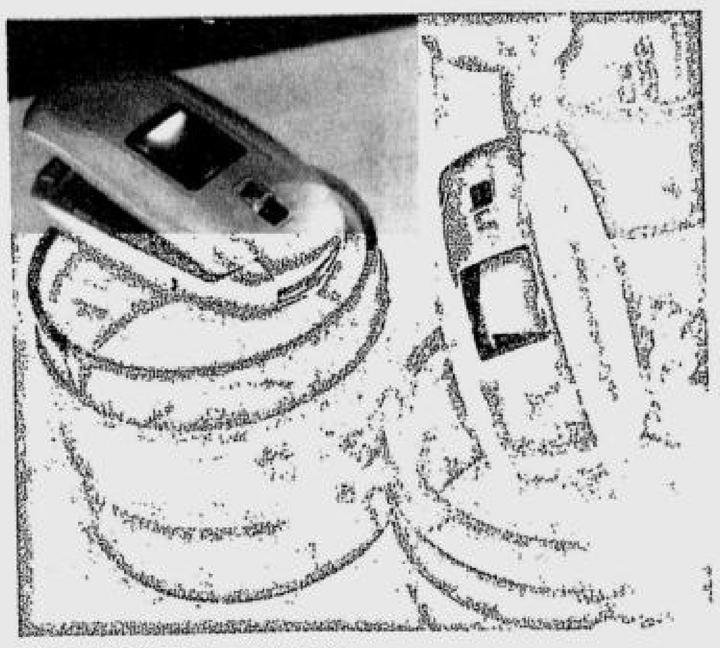
CHRISTIAN Collins of Samsung Electronics brags about his new baby, the SGH-i300 music phone.



THE NEW "girl's best friend"

"THE RIGHT thing says everything." Classy girl with luxe phone

SGH-X810: love the wheel.

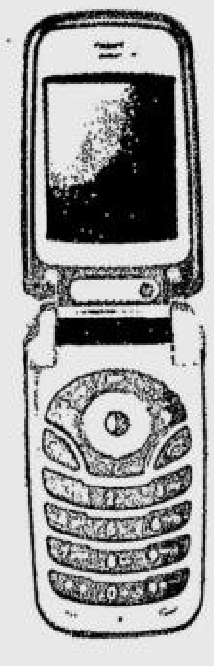
ence

DPA), multimedia (Mobile Camera/Game/Music/PC) and services (MobileTV, WiBro). With these new features and designs, mobile phones will no longer be just for calls or SMS, but will also function as hubs for imaging, music, e-mails and gaming, on top of being stylish fashion accessories as well.

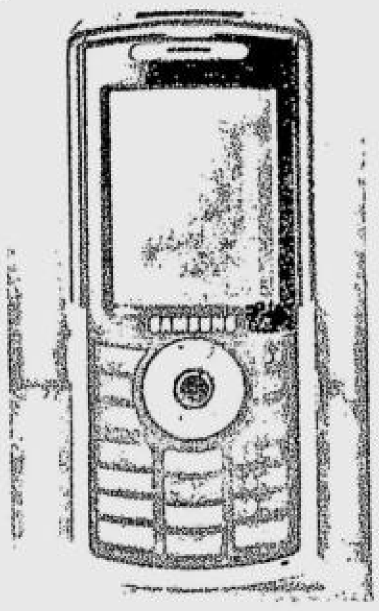
The stars of Samsung's show were the SCH-V770, the world's first seven-megapixel cameraphone, and the ultra-luxe SGH-D600, the successor of the award winning SGH-D500. Another scene-stealer was the iPod-meets-mobile-phone SGH-i300, a 3GB music smartphone which has a "plug-and-play files-to-go" function.

Multi-taskers, music lovers, shutterbugs, gameheads, fashionistas and anybody else eager to switch, here are Samsung's latest mobile treats to enhance your digital lifestyles.

BLUETOOTH for keeps: direct-print with your phone.



SGH-Z300: designed for music lovers

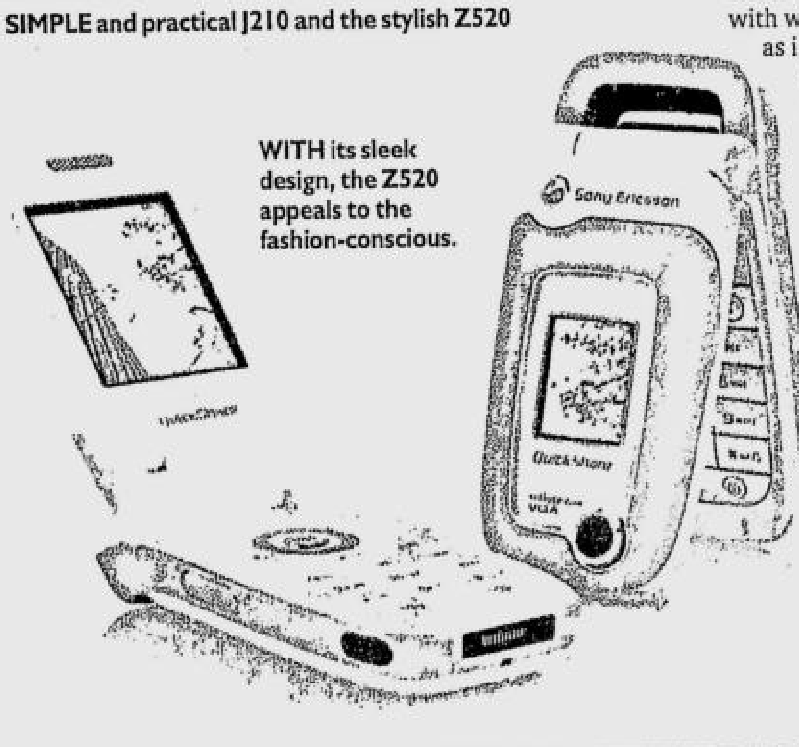


SGH-i300: with "Plug & Play Files-to-go" function

SGH-D600: great multimedia phone

ne personality?

THE SIMPLE and practical J210 and the stylish Z520



WITH its sleek design, the Z520 appeals to the fashion-conscious.

left and game action buttons on the right of the screen are used for two-handed control. With a 64-MB memory, you can download and store hundreds of games, movie clips, music videos and ring tones (approximately 300 pictures or 200 videos), and stereo sound can be enjoyed through the headset packaged with the phone.

The tri-band phone is also supplied with music-copying PC software and a USB cable for fast transfer of content from the PC. If a call comes in when you are listening to music, the music fades out and resumes when the call is finished; and since the ring tone sounds through the headphones, chances of missing a call are minimized. It also employs the PlayNow feature.

Mostly D's

Trendy. You're always up-to-date with the latest styles and fashion hunts.

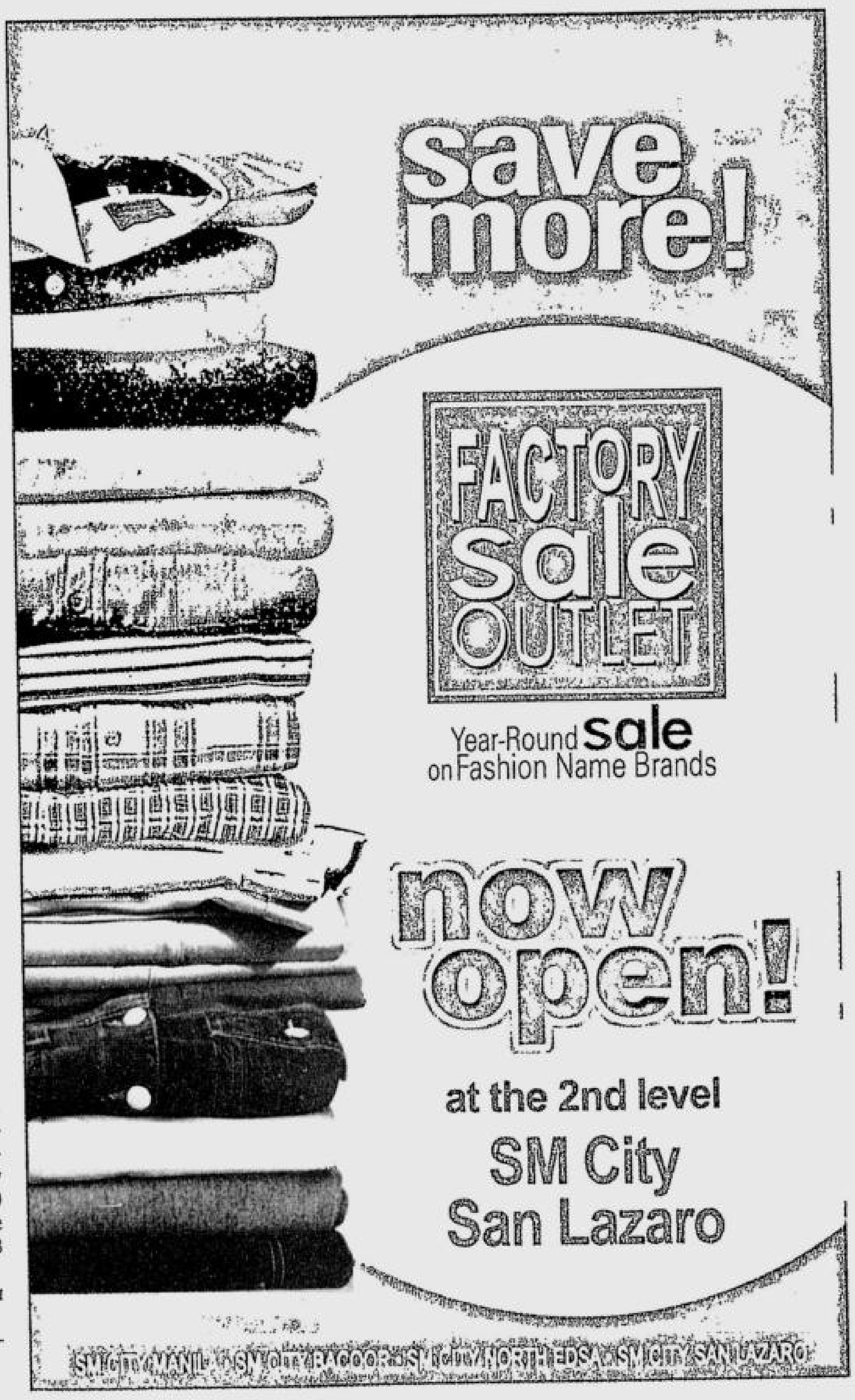
The Sony Ericsson Z520 is a compact quad-band phone encased in a slim, elegant clamshell aimed at fashion-conscious individuals. The phone showcases the new 8x caller ID-associated light effects feature, with which you can instantly identify a caller as it flashes one of the eight light patterns on the phone's perimeter, all equally paired with melodies and linked to the phonebook.

With a VGA-camera with a 4x digital zoom, the model has its camera lens on the same side of the external screen, so you can see your reflection and make sure you capture that perfect photo.

The Z520 has a built-in "Sex and the City"-inspired game called "New York Nights," which challenges you to survive New York after having arrived with only a few dollars in your pockets. The Z520 also includes the PlayNow feature to add downloads to its 16-MB memory.

With reports from Ryan Chua

E-mail the author at chloe_dominique@yahoo.com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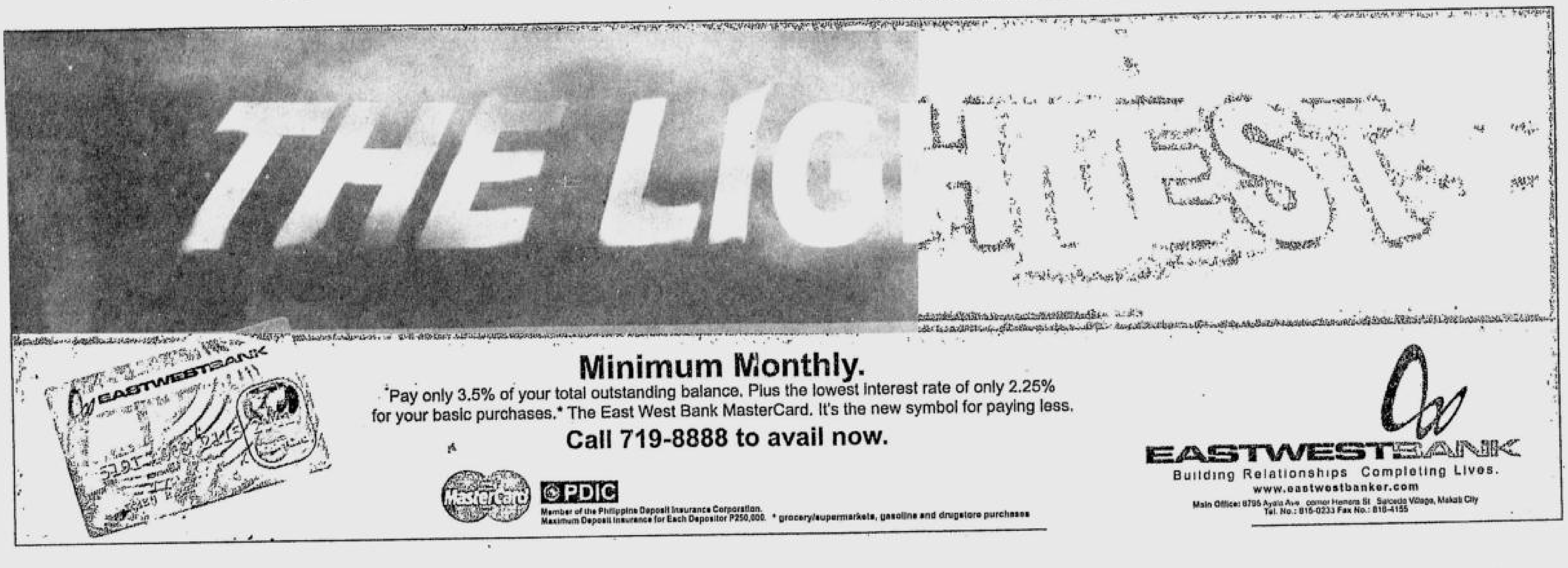

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SUNTEC City is home to the Fountain of Wealth, the largest fountain in the world.

Singapore's small pleasures

By Cheryl Tiu
2bU! Correspondent

ON ORCHARD Road, I fell in love with the Heeren Shop, which boasts of Mu (avant-garde collections from local designer Alfie Leong) and Urban Male Co. (extensive line of Havaianas for enthusiasts).

I spent a lot of time at Suntec City and saw the world's largest fountain, the Fountain of Wealth. I also dined at the oldest Arab-themed restaurant in the city, Café Al Caire, on Arab Street, and gave in to my relentless whim for Indian cuisine at a no-frills canteen, Usman Restaurant, in Little India. I was also able to walk through the gorgeous riverfront promenades of Clarke Quay and Boat Quay, and feast on Spanish *tapas* and sangria while basking in the lush *al fresco* ambience of Chijmes.

Due to an instant friendship with Antoinette Tan of Singapore's popular Female Magazine, I was able to discover some of city's simple yet exhilarating secrets.

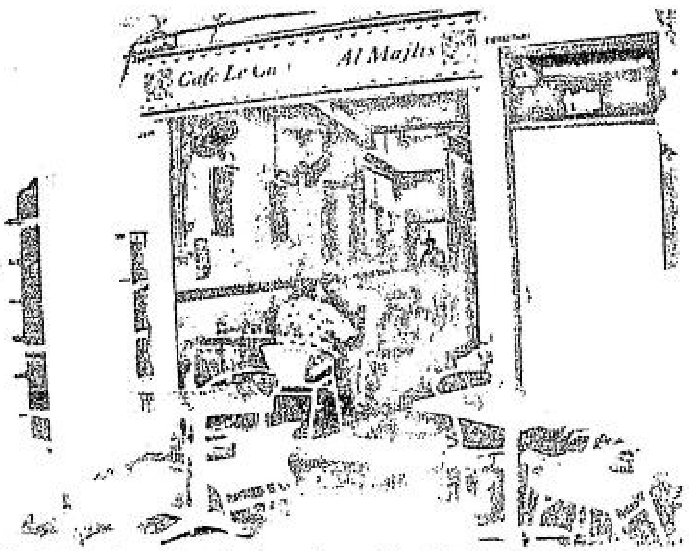
1. **Half-priced waffles at Geláre.** Any passerby is instinctively lured to the Australian-based café merely by the empowering aroma of its freshly baked waffles and cones. And let me just say that in this case, smelling is believing. I had a small waffle topped with Butter Pecan ice cream and I gobbled it all up in three minutes, barely pausing to swallow! Tuesdays are 50-percent off on all waffles, so expect a pretty full house. Geláre's first overseas franchise store is located at Suntec City Shopping Mall, but it can also be found in numerous spots around the city.

2. **Sim Lim Square is electronics haven.** Singapore is a popular destination for electronics and IT products for their wide variety and cheap prices. However, while most tourists flock to Lucky Plaza on Orchard Road, most Singaporeans would recommend Sim Lim's. Since it isn't situated in a tourist district, the prices can go much cheaper. The place has six floors with more than 500 retail outlets. (Tip: Always make sure to ask for their best price.) However, to be wary of possible fraud that may occur at smaller shops, I encourage grabbing a copy of "Staretailer" at the Information Desk, which lists authorized distributors and wholesalers. I was able to buy an Ixus40 for my brother Chris at Hoon Cheong Electronics, an authorized dealer for Canon, for an excellent deal. Remember to ask for a tax rebate on their five-percent GST so the store can already issue a form. Upon claiming the rebate, it is important to keep the purchased gadget in a hand-carry bag because airport officials normally ask to see them before handing back the tax rebate. Sim Lim Square is located at 1 Rocher Canal Road.

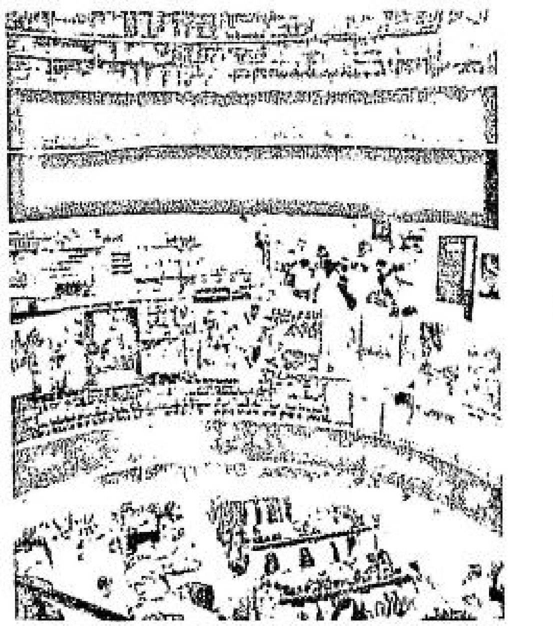
FREE-FLOWING drinks for the ladies at O bar draw in throngs of people.

With the help of a local, I discovered the island's simple secrets

3. **Wednesdays are Ladies' Night.** Unlike in Manila where Ladies' Night merely offers free entrance, in Singapore, Ladies' Night means free-flowing drinks for all females at most clubs. Antoinette took me to O Bar, a popular destination for the youth (18 years old and above), and as early as 10:30 p.m., it was already packed! They had already posted a "Full" sign outside but Antoinette and I walked up to the concierge anyway and presented our IDs. I was able to snag myself a Vodka Cranberry after furiously making my way to the bar against other females. But since the crowd was bordering on suffocation, we left for Zouk. While Singapore's most popular club (which includes Zouk, Phuture, Velvet Underground and Wine Bar) didn't have free-flowing drinks, it was still fun dancing to Singapore's (surprisingly) incredibly vibrant nightlife. O Bar is at 11 Unity Street, Robertson Walk; Zouk is at 17 Jiak Kim Street.



CAFÉ Le Caire, the oldest Arab restaurant in the city, serves a mean bukhari chicken.



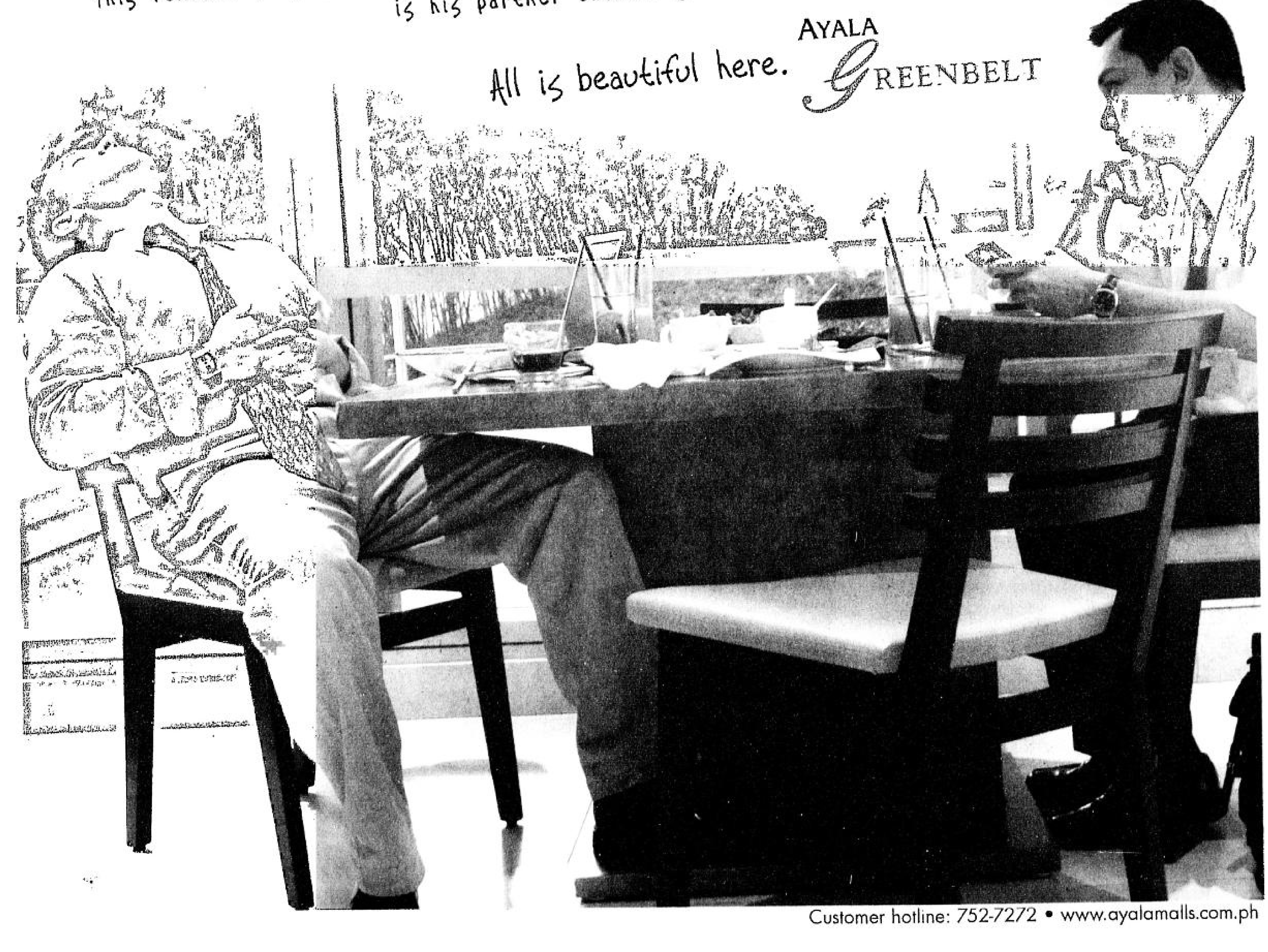
OPEN 24 hours, Mustafa in Little India sells practically everything.

PRETTY Bussorah Street, adjacent to Arab Street, is lined with souvenir stores.

4. **Free local calls abound in the airport.** After going through immigration at the Changi International Airport, make use of one of the many phone stands to bid adieu to friends and family in the city. All local calls, whether to land or mobile phones, are free and without time limit.

5. **Mustafa Centre is the best place for late-night shopping.** Or even daytime shopping. This two-block, seven-story shopping haven at the heart of Little India has literally everything, from clothes to textiles, luggage, electronics, jewelry, food and toys—all at rock-bottom prices. Mustafa Centre is located at 145 Syed Alwi Road.

E-mail the author at chloe_dominique@yahoo.com.



'The best deals are sealed with the best meals'. So it seems for these two executives who just actuated another business deal over lunch at their favorite Greenbelt restaurant. This venture puts the duo well ahead of projections. All Brian is wary of at the moment is his partner exceeding on a power nap.

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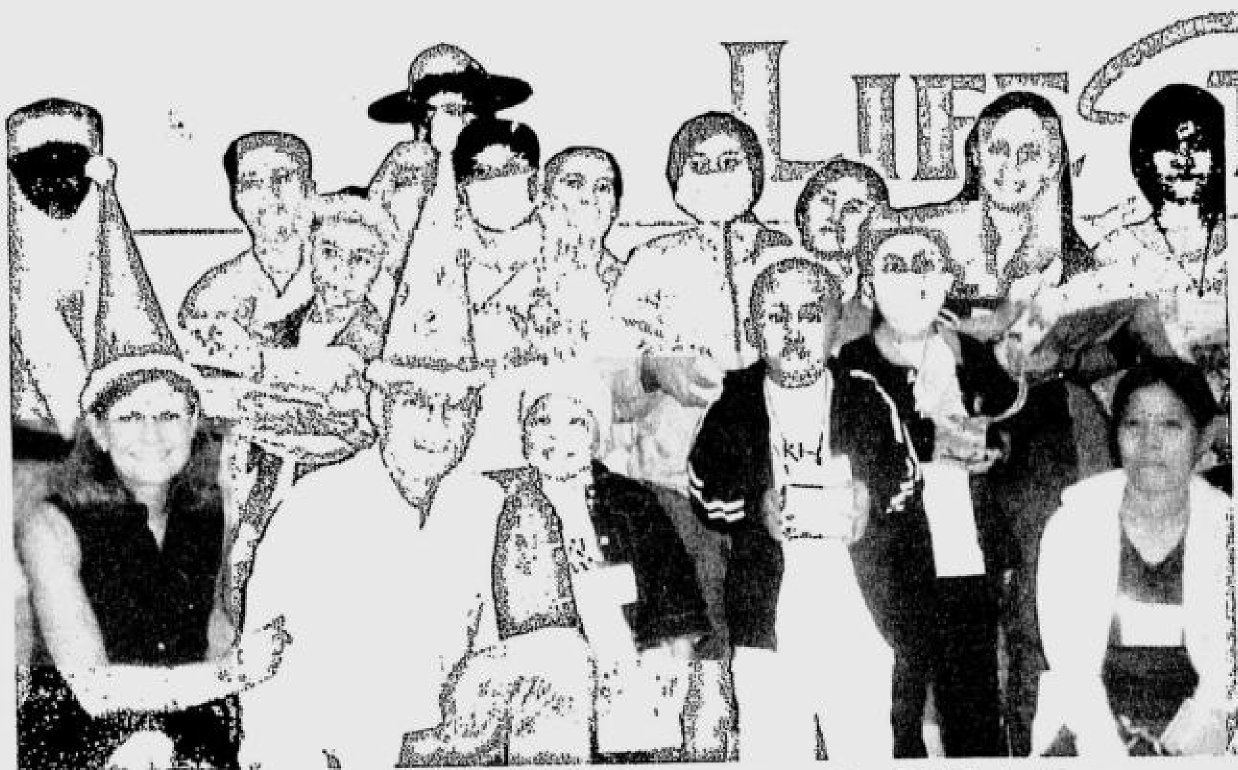

WISH recipients pose with Canadian Ambassador Peter Sutherland (second from left). Their wishes were granted by MAWF-Canada.

Merry Christmas in June

Twelve very sick children find out wishes do come true

Text and photos by Arlene M. Paredes
2bU! Correspondent

WHO said Christmas can only be celebrated in December? Twelve blessed children had their Christmas in June. And it felt just right.

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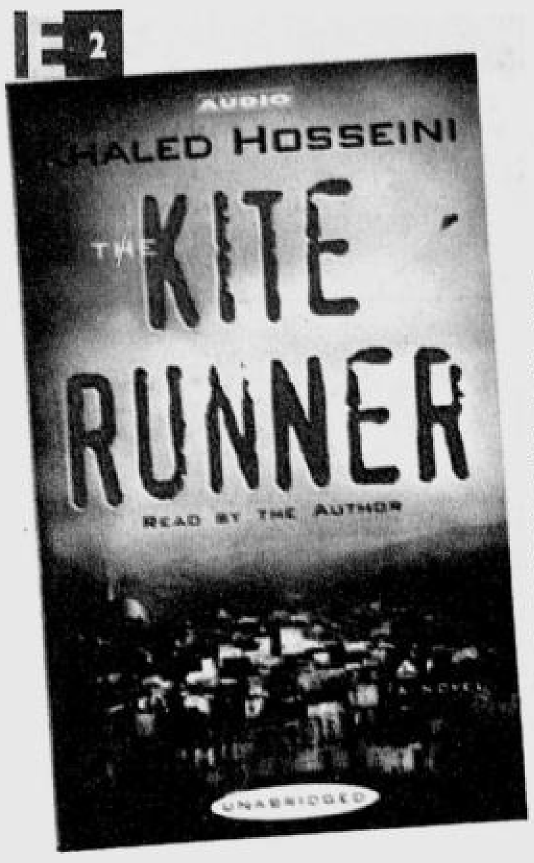


Redemption in Afghanistan

By Leslie C. Tan
2bU! Correspondent

"THE KITE-RUNNER," Khaled Hosseini's first novel, is set in Kabul, Afghanistan. The story starts with young Amir, a Pashtun, growing up with their family's servant's son, Hassan, a Hazara. They do everything together—playing pranks, reading books, picking fights with neighborhood kids. Of course, it is always Amir who would start the pranks, and read the books to the illiterate Hassan, but Hassan would prove to be the braver fighter a thousand times over with his mean slingshot.

They are a perfect tandem at kite-fighting, an age-old winter tradition in Afghanistan where young boys compete in cutting opponent's lines, avoiding trees, and ultimately having the last kite standing. Equally coveted is the last fallen kite. Kite runners would run with the wind as the kite drifts away and eventually touches ground.

In the winter of 1975, in perhaps the last kite-fighting tournament they join, Amir and Hassan face a life-changing moment. There, in an alleyway where the wind blows that last fallen kite, a turn of events leads Amir to betray his beloved servant.

With the Russian invasion in the 1980s, Amir and his father Baba flee to the safety of America. There they build a life from scratch, a far cry from the privileged life they left behind. Even with the distance though, the past has a way of clawing back into our consciousness. And so, Amir unwillingly embarks on his personal road to redemption, bringing him back to Pakistan, then to Kabul.

"The Kite-Runner" is a powerful tale of one man's loss of innocence, coming to terms with his identity, and finally to redemption. "I wondered if that was how forgiveness budded, not with the fanfare of epiphany, but with pain gathering its things, packing up, and slipping away unnoticed in the middle of the night." Twenty years later, Amir has learned to forgive himself. There is a way to be good again.

Hosseini tells Amir's tale with a rawness that is rare among writers. He gives an honest take on Afghan society—the discrimination of Pashtuns against Hazaras in the '70s, how the Talibans resorted to ethnic cleansing, how courtships were staged, and even jokes about Mullah Nasruddin (much like the Pinoy's Erap jokes).

The story's plot is readily believable, and I was quite surprised to find out that it is not a memoir, but a masterpiece of Hosseini's imagination. Still, it is very likely that there are bits and pieces of Amir in each of us. No one comes as a hero through and through, not even the great Baba, a portrait of a proud, well-respected, and feared Afghan. Father and son are both weighed down by shackles of guilt and by their unspeakable secrets. It takes a lower-caste Hazara in the form of Hassan and also his father Ali, to show them the way to redemption, for indeed "true redemption is when guilt leads to good."

MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Easy animal lovin'

ILLUSTRATIONS: STEPH BRAVO

How can we help our furry and not-so-furry friends? The People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (Peta) offers a list of to-do's

By Dan Abril
2bU! Contributor

HERE are some ways to help our animal friends. Leave a trail of leaflets wherever you go—in waiting-room reading racks, on the bus, in dressing rooms, at the gym, in coffee shops, at your friends' houses, in restaurants. To order leaflets and other literature, write to Philippines@PETA.org.

Enclose a leaflet with every letter, greeting card, and bill that you send.

Provide a link to Peta's website, PETA.org, if you have a blog or a home page on the Internet. Use an animal-friendly quote or fact in your signature on your e-mail messages.

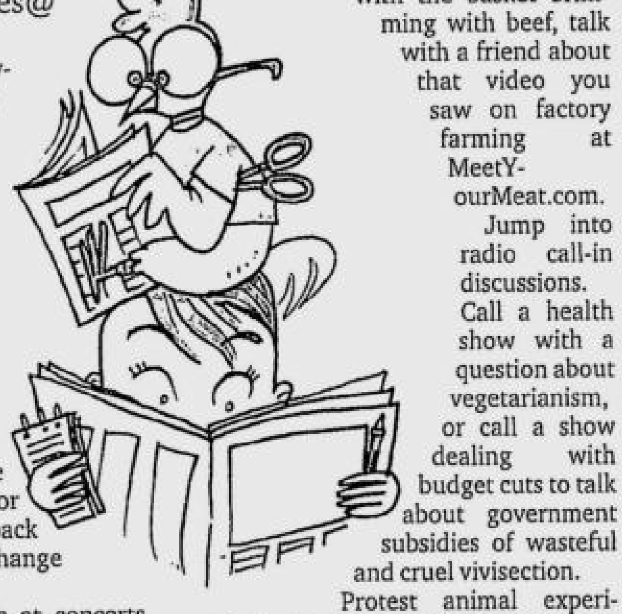
Take advantage of suggestion boxes and fill out consumer comment cards whenever you see something that hurts or helps animals. Your feedback can inspire businesses to change their policies.

Set up literature tables at concerts and festivals to educate people about animal rights. Provide sign-up sheets so they can be sent more information and be alerted to Peta events.

Join Peta's Activist Network. Peta will alert you when action is needed on national, regional, or local animal issues. There are already more than 500 members in the Philippines alone. To join, visit AnimalActivist.com/actjoin.asp.

If you are a student, organize an animal rights group in your school so that you can hold events and distribute literature. Arrange a talk on vegetarianism, animal testing, or cruelty-free living. We can send you what you need for a stress-free presentation

Text information to your friends, family, and newspapers.



Speak out! Within earshot of that shopper ahead of you with the basket brimming with beef, talk with a friend about that video you saw on factory farming at MeetYourMeat.com.

Jump into radio call-in discussions.

Call a health show with a question about vegetarianism, or call a show dealing with budget cuts to talk about government subsidies of wasteful and cruel vivisection.

Protest animal experiments in your community's classrooms. Instead of dissecting animals, suggest that the school use films, computer simulations, and detailed 3-D models instead. Visit TeachKind.org to learn how to put compassion back into classrooms.

Ask the librarian in your local school or public library to write to Peta on library letterhead and request Peta's free library pack of books, videos, and fact-sheets (Peta, Library Pack, 501 Front St., Norfolk, VA 23510 USA).

Request vegan meals in school and office cafeterias. Contact the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine (P.O. Box 6322, Washington, DC 20015 USA or PCRM.org) for vegan recipes that are specially formulated for institutions.

Carry Peta's "Vegetarian Meals Served Here" window stickers, and always ask restaurant managers to add more vegan dishes to their menus. Ask grocery stores to carry frozen veggie entrées, as well as tofu and soy milk. Text your address to Peta at 0919-5318314 to request stickers.

Write or call companies to let them know that you won't be purchasing their products until they declare a permanent ban on animal testing. For a free list of company addresses and phone numbers, visit CaringConsumer.com or text your address to Peta.

Help your local animal shelters, which are always in need of volunteers to walk dogs, play with animals, and donate supplies like blankets, kitty litter and food.

Document and report cruelty wherever you see it—in a store, in a neighbor's backyard, at the zoo. Contact Peta for instructions on how to conduct a cruelty investigation.

Boycott entertainment that involves animals, such as zoos and racetracks, and report activities such as illegal cockfighting and dogfighting to the authorities immediately.

Educate! Most people don't know how their habits cause animal suffering, or how easy it is to change.

Animal 'writes'

Keep a stack of blank, prestamped postcards by your television, along with the addresses of the major stations. When a show promotes or trivializes animal abuse, jot down the station, program name, and date and fire off a brief, polite message to the network. (And remember to thank a station when it airs something good for animals!)

Set aside an hour every week to write to elected officials, industry executives, or newspaper and magazine editors. Keeping up with the latest news will help you identify appropriate topics. Multiply your efforts by throwing a letter-writing party, complete with vegan snacks.

Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper about an animal issue such as vegetarian eating, the circus, or vivisection. You can reach thousands of people if your letter is printed! Here are some tips:

"Read local papers and magazines for fuel for letters. Watch for articles, ads, or letters that mention animals.

"You can write on good news, as well as bad. Thank the paper for its coverage of an anti-leather protest or for running profiles of animals available for adoption at shelters.

"Be brief! Often one short, pithy paragraph is enough. Try to stay under 300 words (about one typed page). Editors are less likely to print long letters.

"Type, if possible. Otherwise, print legibly. Be sure to use correct grammar and spelling, and remember to have your letter proofread.

" Increase your credibility by mentioning anything that makes you especially qualified to write on a topic: For instance, if you are a nutritionist, state that in your letter about the health advantages of a meat-free diet.

"Try to tell readers something that they're not likely to know—such as how chickens are raised to produce eggs—and encourage them to take action (such as to stop buying eggs).

"For more tips, read Peta's guide to letter-writing at www.peta.org/alert/guide.html or text your address to Peta for a free copy.

Want to know more? Contact Peta at Philippines@peta.org or text Peta at 0919-5318314.

Merry Christmas in June

From page E1

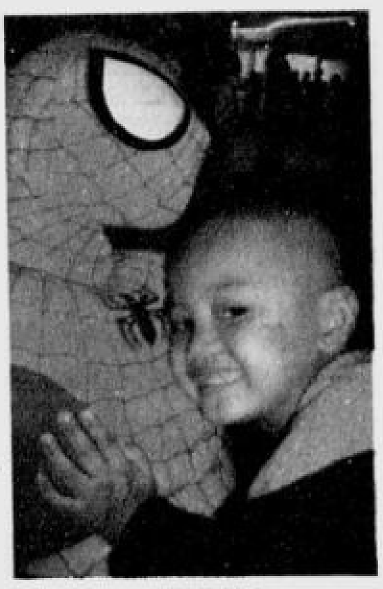
They were meek and rather bashful on stage, answering questions in at most, three-worded phrases, but what they lacked in words they made up for with the genuine expressions of gratitude and delight in their beautiful little faces as they received their Christmas wishes in June.

Twelve children, aged 4-17 years old, received their Christmas wishes from Make-A-Wish Foundation (MAWF) Philippines during "MAWF Christmas in June" at the SM Megamall Ice Skating Rink in June 29.

Recipients of Christmas wishes were: Wilgein Oraye, 4, with acute lymphocytic leukemia; Bryan Jasper Manila, 7, with brain tumor; Lani Versoza, 11, with brain tumor; Alvin James Castillo, 7, with acute lymphocytic leukemia; Paul Rodriguez, 7, with acute myelogenous leukemia; Brian Edward Hermogeno, 7, with beta thalassemia (blood disorder); Yanna Rose Guevarra, 6, with acute lymphocytic leukemia; Ana Margarita Pangilinan, 17, with acute lymphocytic leukemia; Jayson Tunay, 9, with acute lymphocytic leukemia; Bianca Ericka Valencia, 8, with yolk sac tumor; Samantha Luz, 14, with acute lymphocytic leukemia; and Juan Carlo Ramos, 4, with acute lymphocytic leukemia.

The children are separately confined at the Philippine General Hospital, University of Sto. Tomas Hospital, Philippine Children's Medical Center and Fe Del Mundo Medical Center.

FOUR-YEAR-OLD Wilgein Oraye is thrilled with his new Gameboy SP.



FOUR-YEAR-OLD JC Ramos gleefully plays with Spiderman.

Three of them wished for a Gameboy SP, another three wished for a television, while the others separately wished for a bike, a remote-controlled car, a cell phone with radio, a cell phone with camera, a discman, and a Spiderman toy.

Their wishes were rather simple, mostly things that they could use every day, things that a regular kid would wish to have. This means my friends and I could sponsor a wish and take part in the wonderful mission of MAWF: "We grant the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions to enrich the human experience with hope, strength and joy."

Astonishing courage

It was a blessing to witness the wish-granting ceremony and see the precious smile on the little children's faces. This author felt truly humbled by the astonishing courage displayed by the children, each of them suffering from a serious illness yet there was not a clue on their faces that they were ready to give up or stop enjoying life to the fullest.

Despite the discomfort of masks and their ailing body, they were radiating with a different kind of energy—the kind that would generate strength and hope in the hearts of those who would care to really look at them. It should not be surprising, though. They are children. If anyone could inspire us at the most trying times in our life, the children with their unfailing hope and unwavering faith, would.

THE 12 kids pose with Star Circle celebrities.

Christmas in June was made possible by MAWF Philippines along with MAWF-Canada (represented by Canadian Ambassador Peter Sutherland and Gerard Belanger, head of Canadian International Development Agency), Philippine Daily Inquirer, Toy Kingdom, and individual sponsors, Celine Madamba and Elaine Maralit.

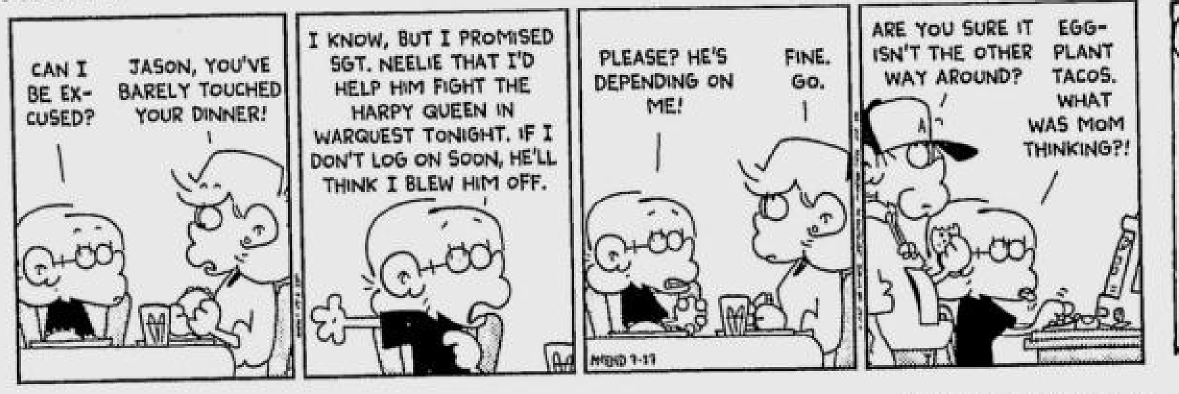
MAWF was founded in 1980 when a little boy named Chris Greicius, who was suffering from leukemia, realized his wish to become a police officer. Since then, MAWF has granted wishes of over a hundred thousand children with life-threatening medical conditions all over the world.

Here in the Philippines, MAWF first granted a wish in 1999. Christian Lanzar, who had hemophilia since birth, had wished to sing to the world. His wish won Best Wish of the Year International. MAWF made Chris's wish possible in a grand fashion when it made Christian sing with no less than Regine Velasquez at the Manila Peninsula fountain during the millennium welcome celebration, broadcast all over the world.

Make-A-Wish Foundation of the Philippines holds office at Suite 303 I-Care Building, 167 Legaspi Corner De La Rosa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City 1229. (Telefax: 840-1553, Website: www.makeawish.org.ph) Donations are accepted through RCBC Peso Account No: 1-288-36555-1.

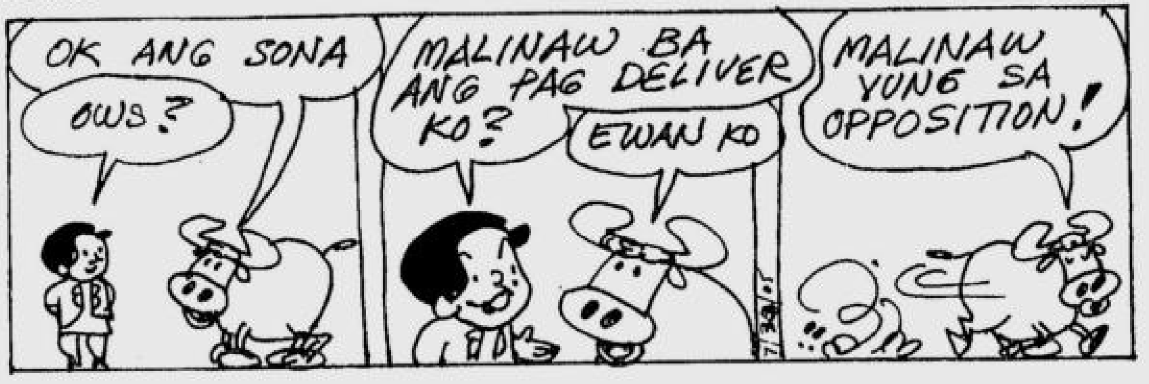
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


CAN I BE EXCUSED?
JASON, YOU'VE BARELY TOUCHED YOUR DINNER!
I KNOW, BUT I PROMISED SGT. NEELIE THAT I'D HELP HIM FIGHT THE HARPY QUEEN IN WARQUEST TONIGHT. IF I DON'T LOG ON SOON, HE'LL THINK I BLEW HIM OFF.
PLEASE? HE'S DEPENDING ON ME!
FINE. GO.
ARE YOU SURE IT ISN'T THE OTHER WAY AROUND?
EGGPLANT TACOS. WHAT WAS MOM THINKING?!
AMEND 7-17

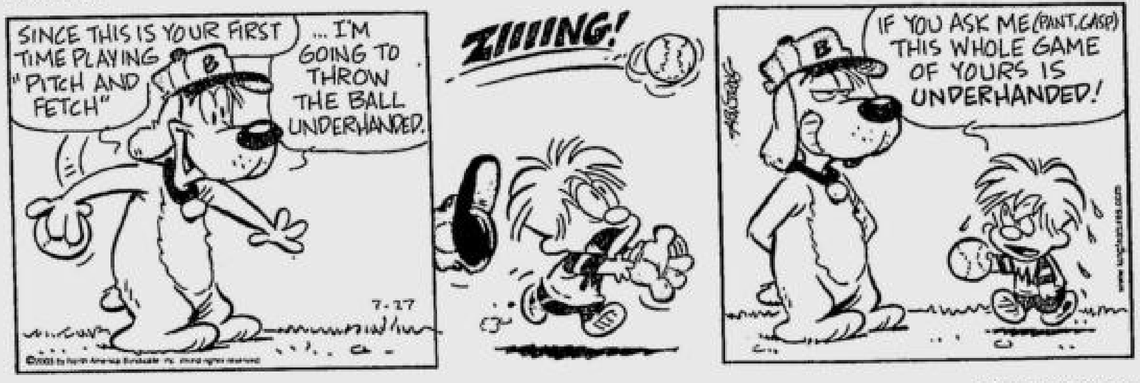
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


OK ANG SONA
OWS?
MALINAW BA ANG PAG DELIVER KO?
EWAN KO
MALINAW YUNG SA OPPOSITION!

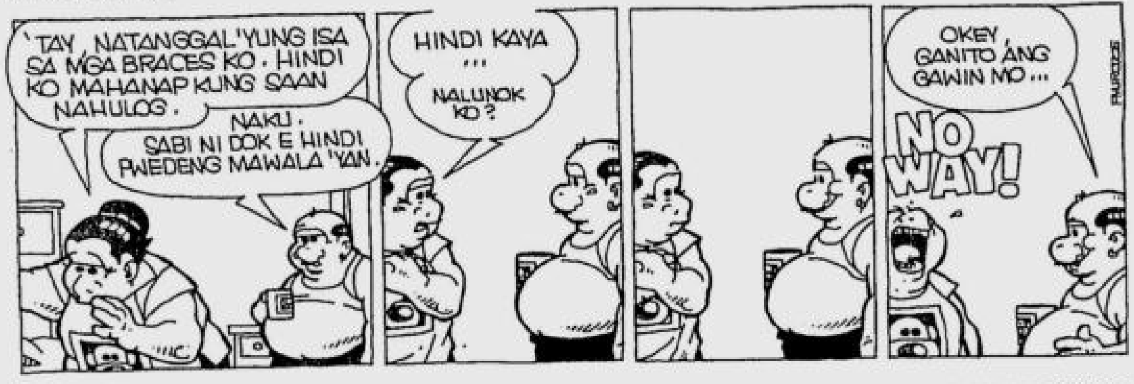
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


SINCE THIS IS YOUR FIRST TIME PLAYING "PITCH AND FETCH"
... I'M GOING TO THROW THE BALL UNDERHANDED.
ZIIIING!
IF YOU ASK ME (PANT, GASP) THIS WHOLE GAME OF YOURS IS UNDERHANDED!
7-27

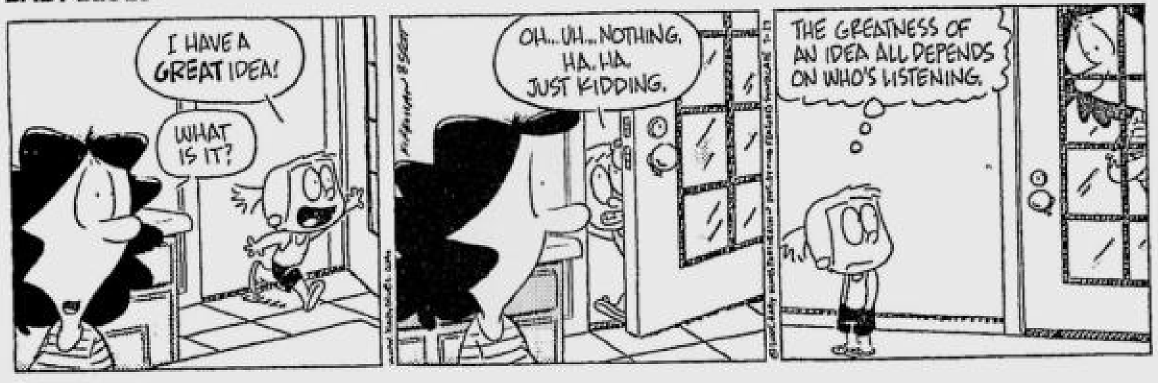
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


'TAY, NATANGGAL 'YUNG ISA SA MGA BRACES KO. HINDI KO MAHANAP KUNG SAAN NAHULOG.
NAKU. SABI NI DOK E HINDI PWEDENG MAWALA 'YAN.
HINDI KAYA ... NALUNOK KO?
OKEY, GANITO ANG GAWIN MO...
NO WAY!

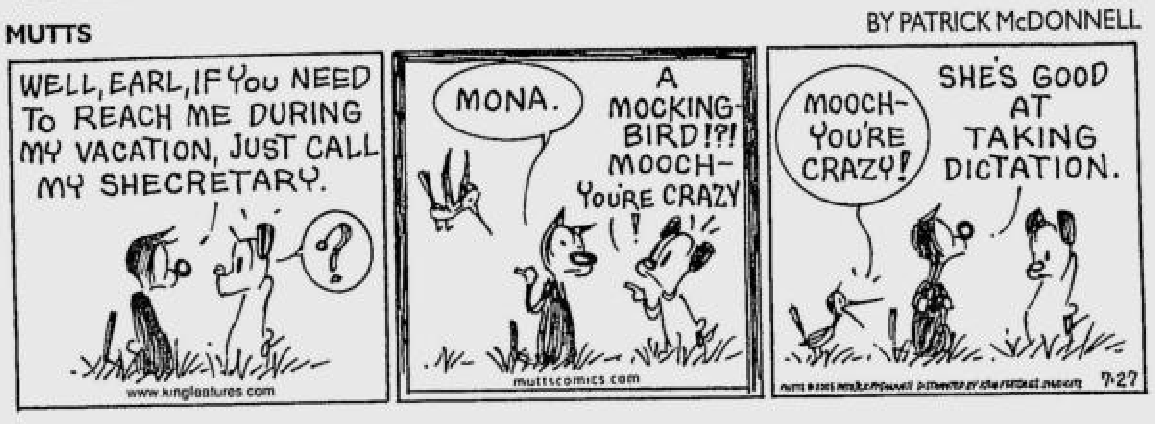
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


I HAVE A GREAT IDEA!
WHAT IS IT?
OH...UH...NOTHING. HA. HA. JUST KIDDING.
THE GREATNESS OF AN IDEA ALL DEPENDS ON WHO'S LISTENING.

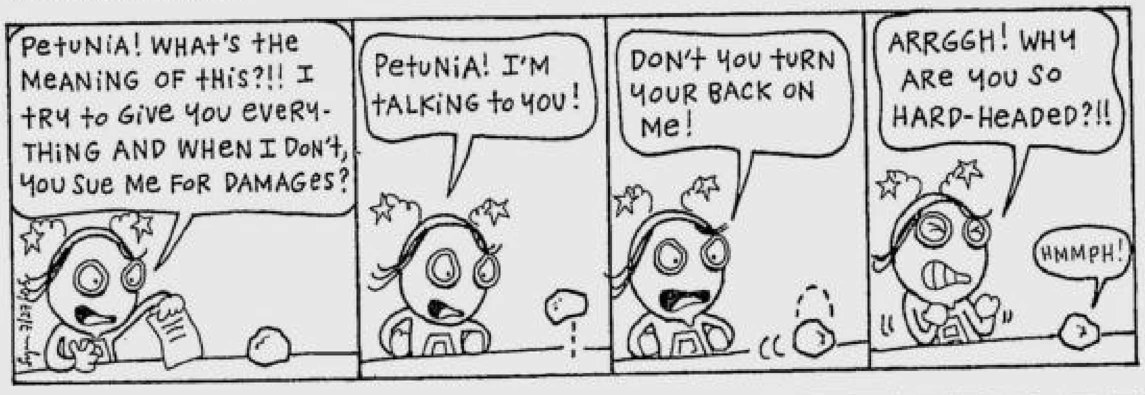
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


WELL, EARL, IF YOU NEED TO REACH ME DURING MY VACATION, JUST CALL MY SHECRETARY.
?
MONA.
A MOCKING-BIRD!?! MOOCH— YOU'RE CRAZY
MOOCH— YOU'RE CRAZY!
SHE'S GOOD AT TAKING DICTATION.
www.kingfeatures.com
muttscomics.com
7-27

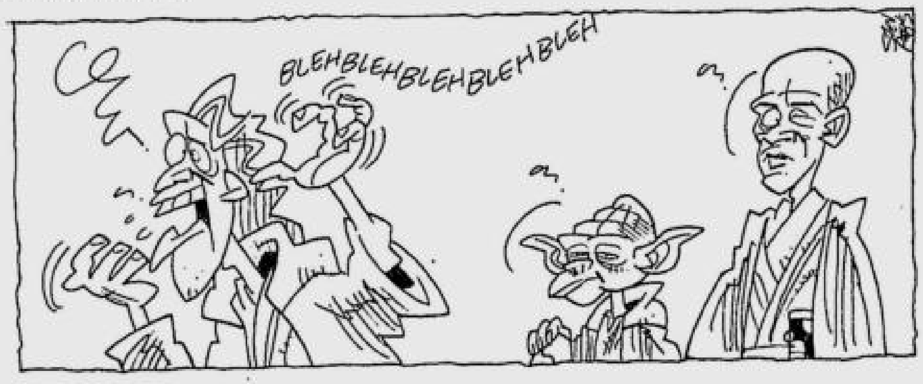
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


PETUNIA! WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS?!! I TRY TO GIVE YOU EVERYTHING AND WHEN I DON'T, YOU SUE ME FOR DAMAGES?
PETUNIA! I'M TALKING TO YOU!
DON'T YOU TURN YOUR BACK ON ME!
ARRGGH! WHY ARE YOU SO HARD-HEADED?!!
HMMPH!

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


BLEHBLEHBLEHBLEHBLEH

AT TULUYAN NA NGANG NA-SEDUCE NG FUNNY SIDE OF THE FORCE SI ANAKIN SKYWALKER

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have poetry in your soul; many of you are musical. Even though you have high standards, you generally tackle many activities at once. (This amazes others.) You're generous with people, but at the same time, you know how to manage your money well. Work hard this year. Your rewards will be apparent in 2006-07. **Birthdate of:** Bharati Mukherjee, author; Bobbie Gentry, singer; Jerry Van Dyke, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You've been thinking about money and finances. There's a major purchase you want to make. Children, vacations, entertaining diversions and the arts appeal to you now.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Today Mars enters your sign. Mars rules the muscles and all forms of aggression. You're very keen now to show others what you can do. You feel confident!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): For some reason, you might find you're working behind the scenes more than usual. Keep away from underhanded activity. Don't give anyone any ammunition to criticize you.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Conflict with friends or a group is likely in the next few weeks. However, this same influence also encourages you to be physically active with groups. (Take the high road.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Your ambition is definitely aroused now. You have big ideas. You want to use your influence in many directions. This is good. You're a natural leader, so don't be afraid to lead others!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Travel plans and ideas you have to promote your education or training look excellent now. Don't hesitate to act on them. Your enthusiasm will carry the day!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You feel increasingly passionate about things. Be patient with others when working out details about shared property. Respect where others are coming from.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Conflicts with partners are quite likely now and in the next few weeks. Your best option is to be patient and tolerant, and to listen to all sides. Avoid knee-jerk reactions!

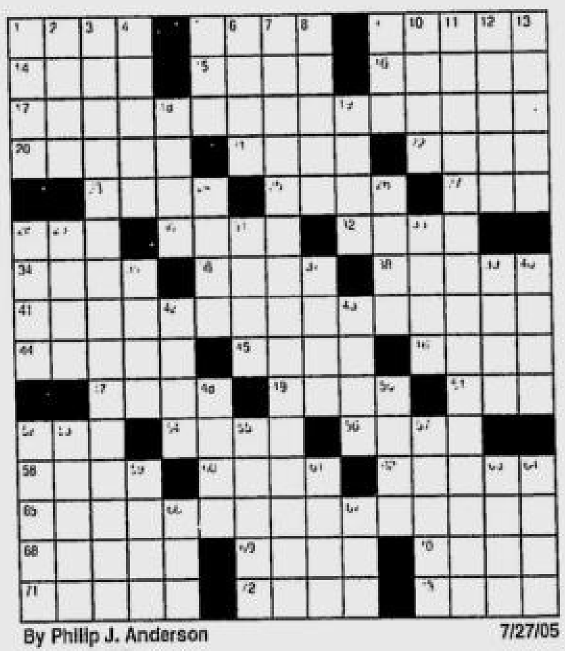
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You're willing to work very hard now for what you want, either at home or on the job. With this kind of determination and energy, you'll accomplish a lot.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You've been working hard for a long time now. Don't you think it's time for a vacation? You need some playful time to enjoy yourself. Use your creative talents now, if possible.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Considerable chaos and/or tension at home might be taking place due to residential moves, renovations or visiting relatives. Keep your objectivity about things.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Your daily tempo is increasing, with short trips, conversations with siblings and lots of errands and busy tasks. You're extremely convincing with others now. You can easily persuade, influence, market and sell your ideas!

DAILY CROSSWORD

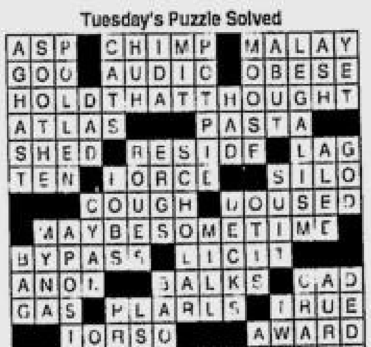


By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR
7/27/05

ACROSS
1 Deli submarine
5 Old adages
9 Punches
14 Dead Sea kingdom
15 Ballplayer Moises
16 Former Yankee manager Joe
17 Three seas
20 Ragu rival
21 Raison d'__
22 Quaker's pronoun
23 Pool-table adjunct
25 Holbrook and March
27 Little devil
28 Elected ones
30 Consecrated
32 Anna of "Nana"
34 Kiddy taboo
36 Sunscreen ingredient
38 Pixyish
41 Three seas
44 Twistable joint
45 Go on a tirade
46 Sea eagles
47 Long, long times
49 Plant anchor
51 Double curve
52 Autobahn auto
54 Title paper
56 In the vicinity
58 Vault
60 Town near Caen
62 Relieve
65 Three seas
68 French pancake
69 S-shaped molding
70 Indigo plant
71 Part of ROK
72 Mil. rank
73 Type of tide

DOWN
1 Support
2 Fulda feeder
3 Three seas
4 Sappho's last letter
5 Nordic flyers' letters
6 Out of the wind
7 Three seas
8 Toyota model
9 RR stop
10 Ronnie of the NFL
11 Three seas
12 Husband-to-be
13 Finish
18 Leven or Lomond
19 Squirmy fish
24 Keystone guys
26 Dance move
28 Atahualpa, e.g.
29 A.m.-p.m. connection
31 Bert of "The Wizard of Oz"
33 French pronoun
35 Christiania, today
37 Italian river
39 Travelers' stops
40 Untouchable Eliot
42 Keep an eye on
43 Type of collar
48 Hr. with a shrink
50 Brewed drinks
52 Obstruct
53 French subway
55 Attitudes of a people
57 Highway to Fairbanks
59 Le Pew of cartoons
61 Designer Cassini
63 Upolu Island port
64 Shrill cry
66 Actor Stephen
67 Permit to

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved



ASP■CHIMP■MALAY
GOO■AUDIO■OBESE
HOLDTHATTHOUGHT
ATLAS■■■PASTA■■
SHED■RESIDE■LAG
TEN■FORCE■■SILO
■■■COUGH■DOUSED
■MAYBESOMETIME■
BYPASS■LICIT■■■
ANON■■BALKS■CAD
GAS■PEARLS■TRUE
■■TORSO■■■AWARD
ILLGETBACKTOYOU
SEERS■AWAIT■ORC
MOSES■BENDY■NAT

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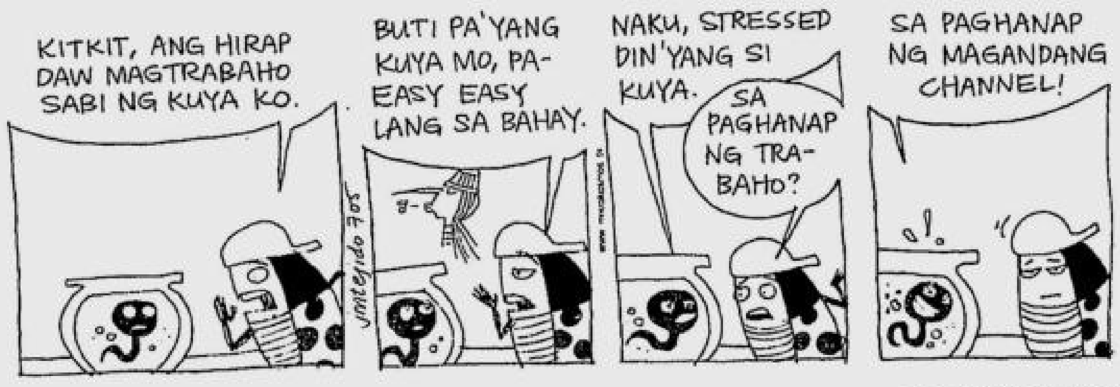
7/27/05

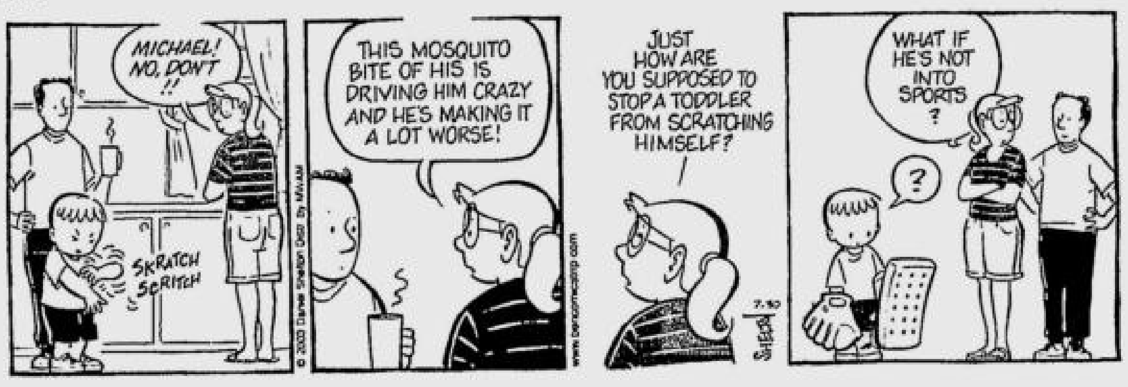
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


KITKIT, ANG HIRAP DAW MAGTRABAHO SABI NG KUYA KO.
BUTI PA 'YANG KUYA MO, PA-EASY EASY LANG SA BAHAY.
NAKU, STRESSED DIN 'YANG SI KUYA.
SA PAGHANAP NG TRABAHO?
SA PAGHANAP NG MAGANDANG CHANNEL!
jmtejido 7-05

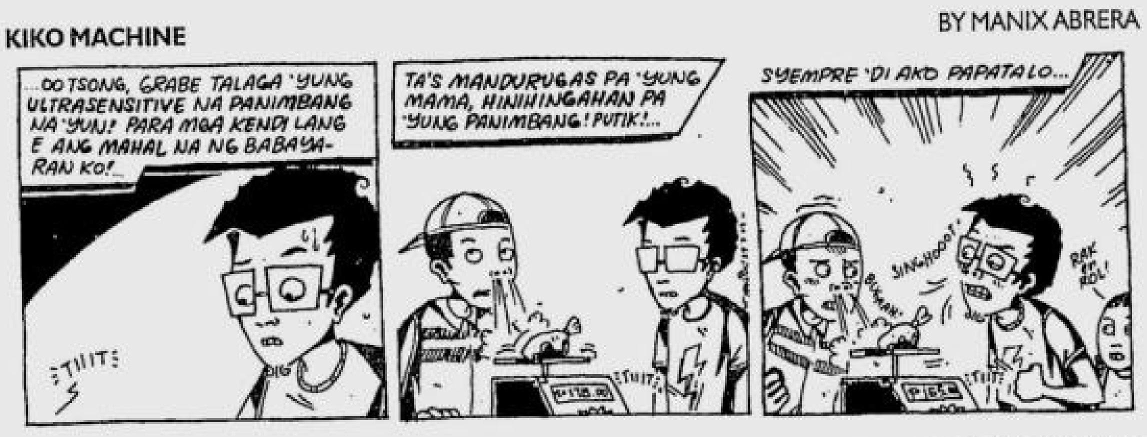
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


MICHAEL! NO, DON'T !!
SKRATCH SCRITCH
THIS MOSQUITO BITE OF HIS IS DRIVING HIM CRAZY AND HE'S MAKING IT A LOT WORSE!
JUST HOW ARE YOU SUPPOSED TO STOP A TODDLER FROM SCRATCHING HIMSELF?
WHAT IF HE'S NOT INTO SPORTS ?
?
www.bencomicstrip.com
7-30

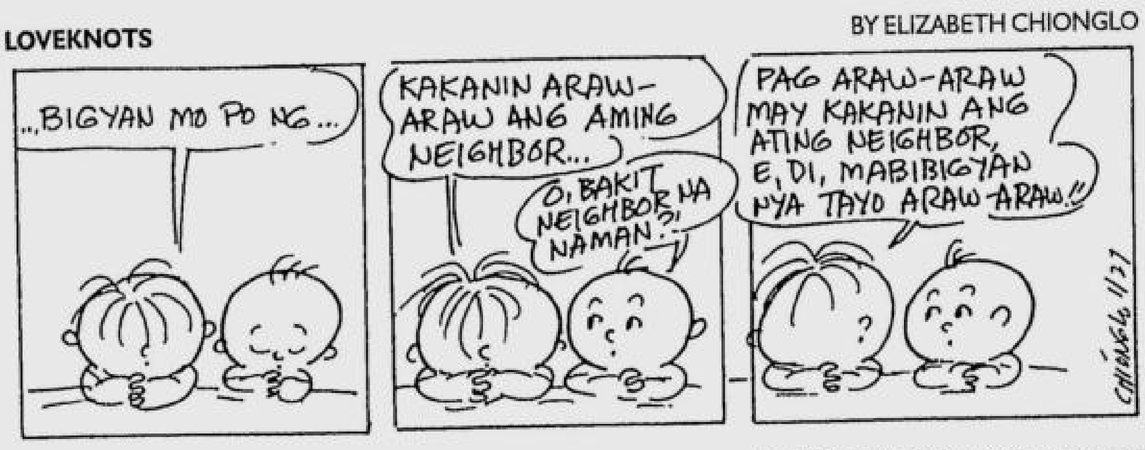
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


...OO TSONG, GRABE TALAGA 'YUNG ULTRASENSITIVE NA PANIMBANG NA 'YUN! PARA MGA KENDI LANG E ANG MAHAL NA NG BABAYARAN KO!...
TIIIT!
TA'S MANDURUGAS PA 'YUNG MAMA, HINIHINGAHAN PA 'YUNG PANIMBANG! PUTIK!...
SYEMPRE 'DI AKO PAPATALO...
SINGHOOT!
RAK EN ROL!

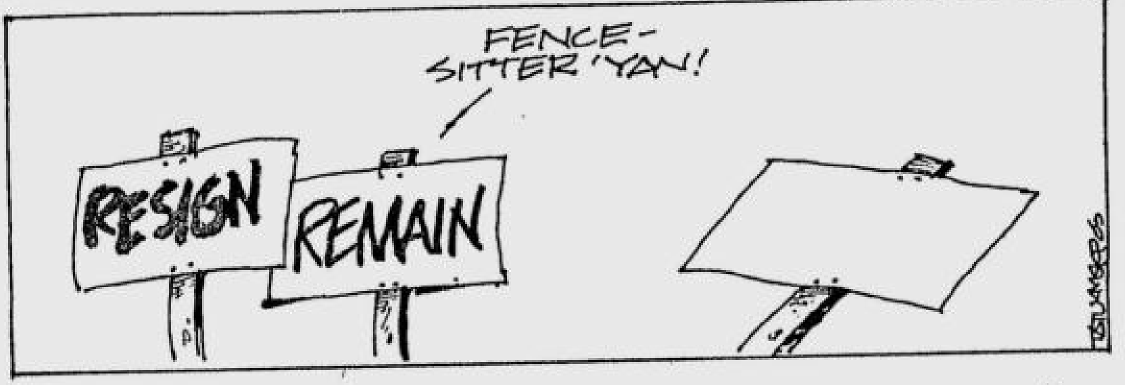
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


...BIGYAN MO PO NG...
KAKANIN ARAW-ARAW ANG AMING NEIGHBOR...
O, BAKIT NEIGHBOR NA NAMAN?!
PAG ARAW-ARAW MAY KAKANIN ANG ATING NEIGHBOR, E, DI, MABIBIGYAN NYA TAYO ARAW-ARAW!!
CHIONGLO 7/27

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


FENCE-SITTER 'YAN!
RESIGN
REMAIN

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